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Distribution information, Mailorder information, Ads being sent in, General Correspondence, and random acts of kindness to:

Punk Planet

P.O. Box 1711 Hoboken, NJ 07030-9998

make any and all checks & money orders out to JULIA COLE, not Punk Planet

Please send all submissions and letters to:

Punk Planet North

PO box 1559 Chicago, IL 60690

a word to the wise: do not send records to this address. They may not get to the right address in time!!

also, to all people mailing in submissions: please, if you can send along a 3 1/2" floppy disk with your piece on it in a word processor file (it can be Mac or IBM so long as you tell us which one it is). Better yet, make it a general text file!

Also, to those of you that TYPE IN ALL CAPS, don't, it's annoying.

Fanzines & Records for review go to:

Punk Planet South

c/o Will Dandy

Route 2 Box 438 Leeds, AL 3509

This is the address that you should send any art (photos, comics, whatever) to:

Punk Planet Motor City

c/o Lois Lane

POB 721145, Berkley MI 48072

For all you electronic whizzes (and really, who isn't) letters, submissions, and general correspondence can be sent to:

PunkPlanet@aol.com

and be sure to check people's columns for their own Email addresses, many of the columnists have them. Gee whiz

And finally, the direct line to a good time: the PPIInfoline, reserve your ad space, find out submission information, and talk about distro goodies.

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and yes, you are calling Chicago

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all ads are due April 10th

and duh, no major label ads!! We're not gonna review your shit, so why

The Solar System

Dan Sinker— Day to day maintenance, planeteer recruiter, distribution boy, layout maker, the biggest sucker of them all

Julia Cole— Day to Day maintenance, mail, money, voice of reason, tied for biggest sucker (and the boxes keep on coming)

Will Dandy— Ad Guy, zine & record collector, sucker

Karen Fisher— Mover, shaker, layout maker, sucker

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Back Cover by Dan Sinker

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Jim Testa

Dave Hake

Darren Cahr

Jim Connell

Slim Moon

Leah Ryan

Kim Bae

Brian Czarnik

Chris Seymour

Sean Capone

John Crawford

Matt Berland

Steve Cook

Jon Entropy

Dave Larson

David Selevan

Bret Van Horn

John Zero

Eric Action

Sean Wipfli

Ray Hennessy

Jason Jarrell

Kenneth Kimmel

Matt Wobensmith

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if you do not understand the back cover, that is OK. It is not for you. It is for a few people that like to make assumptions & pass judgments. If you do not understand the back cover, be proud.

Alright. These little pleas for submissions have been going on for almost a year now. Over that time, we've gotten maybe a handful of submissions. It's a new year kids, time to make a resolution: **WRITE FOR PUNK PLANET!** That's right, bold face and italics; that's cause we're fucking serious here. We rely on your submissions to keep going. That means that we rely on YOU. What have you done for us lately?

We will accept anything (articles, short stories, DIY info, comics, interviews, scene reports, anything). However, that's not a guarantee that it'll get printed. We have space constraints and a level of quality that both factor into what gets in and what doesn't. Not sure if you'll get in? **SEND IT IN ANYWAY!!** Chances are, it's good enough. So why not?

If you're trying to figure out what we ALWAYS need, I'll tell you: Articles, Fiction and Scene Reports. These are always in demand, so **write, write write!!**

A quick word to the wise: we rarely need columns! We have a TON of regular columnists, and just don't have the space to print many others, so proceed with caution. But what's most important? **WRITE WRITE WRITE!!**

We are volunteer run and we make no profit what so ever off of this publication. All money made goes back into Punk Planet. We will review any record or zine as long as it is not on a major label (even if the band itself is, but the record is not) and will not be biased as to whether it is punk or not, since we have about as little a clue what that means as you do. But keep in mind, that **AIN'T** no guarantee of a good review. If it sucks (or—more importantly—if the reviewer assigned to it thinks it sucks), we'll say it sucks.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and if not, we encourage you to make your own zine. In fact, we encourage you to make your own zine anyway (isn't it cute how we always end this part that way).

-your friends at PP

Information interesting to a scant few people
(but we feel like we should print it anyway)

Recently, the concept of actually buying items that cost more than five dollars has hit Punk Planet like a veritable cream pie. Allow me to explain. Several light years ago, big editor Dan and I were involved in a collective in Chicago called the Outhouse (originally the Clubhouse). Futile as it was, we put on a few benefit shows to raise money to buy/lease a space for shows and miscellaneous other activities.

Predictably, the Outhouse disbanded about a year ago though all was not for a loss. We put a show on last December at the Fireside Bowl which, since then, has become quite a hotspot for teenyboppers, I mean punks, to view their favorite bands. Pat pat (me patting Outhousers on the back).

So anyway, Dan and I have had several hundred dollars collecting dust and serving as big bill changers for our respective housemates. Several ideas have been suggested to us, most of which were unfeasible and we eventually decided to use it to buy much needed equipment for Punk Planet such as scanners and software. We are writing this to try to be open about the situation and to avoid outcry amongst those who DO actually remember the Outhouse benefits. Don't worry kids, the money is staying in the "scene" (whatever that means any more).

Questions? Complaints? Just write to Kim or Dan at the Punk Planet North address

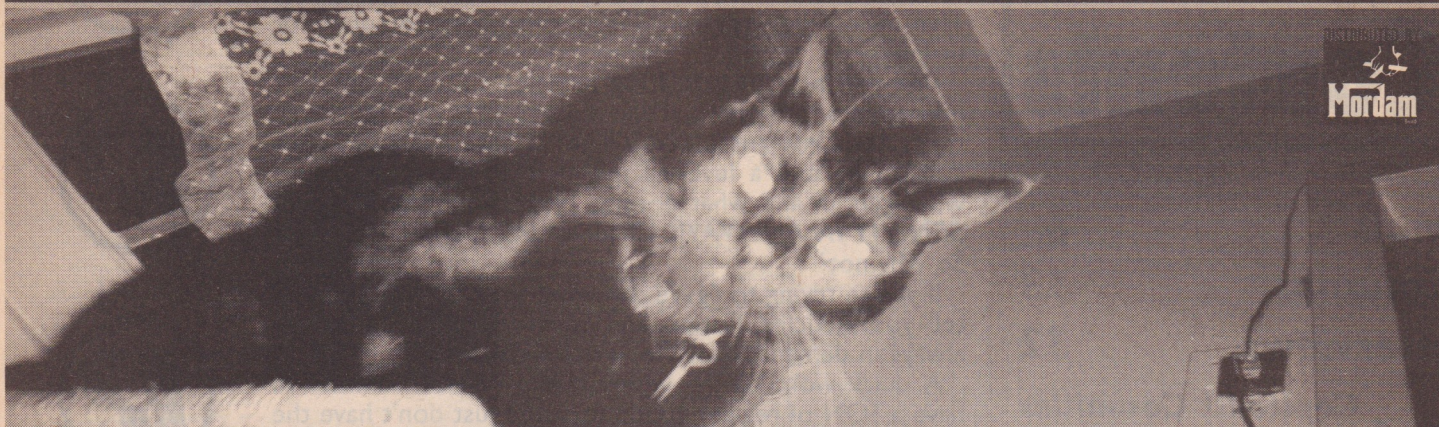
Thank you for your precious time.



Punk Planet

Allied Recordings

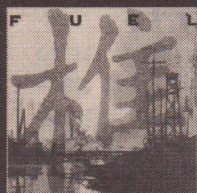
Another year for broke punk.



DISCOURAGED
Mordam



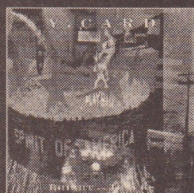
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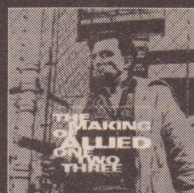
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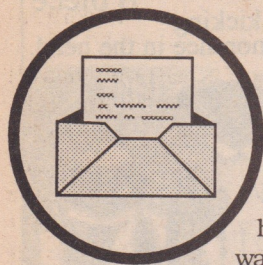
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Punk Planet-

Tonight I witnessed the most pathetic and despicable thing I have ever seen. I watched some kid get beat within an inch of his life, and why? Because he wanted to dance. Is it just me or is there something slightly wrong with this? I decided to go see Murphy's Law (December 9th, 1994) at Studio 1 in Newark, NJ. Now I know Studio 1 and I try to avoid it as much as possible, because of stupid stuff like this. But hey, maybe this scene has matured a little bit. Nope!

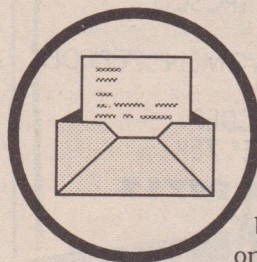
One of the popular bands this night besides Murphy's was a band called Bulldoze. They took the stage with their tougher than all, stronger than you "beat down" attitude while preaching that they were from the old school. A couple of minutes into their set, the stupid shit started. Some kid did something the locals didn't like and about 10 of the Beat Down Crew kicked the living shit out of him. They didn't stop when he hit the ground. They didn't even stop when he lost consciousness. Finally a few bouncers came to stop it and by this time Bulldozer stopped their set and started challenging anyone else who wanted to mess with the "crew". And even before they were able to move this wreck of a kid from the middle of the dance floor, they screamed "scrape this asshole up" and continued on with their set. I suppose by this time people felt funny about dancing so there wasn't all too much movement. Again, they started to yell at the crowd, calling them "chicken shit".

As they took this kid (who looked like he was maybe 15) out, I could see he wasn't well at all. He was covered in blood and limp as can be. Now what gets me is this band claims to "bring back the old school". I'm sorry, old school is more than just a style of music, it's an attitude and a vibe you put out. As a kid I can remember going to CBGB's to see the Sunday matinees. I was maybe 13, but I can remember it well. I can remember having a great time, wanting to come back next week. I remember some sort of unity-not

competition. And not having to worry about "dancing correctly" (the newschool way). What ever happened to circle pits? Whatever happened to the pogo? What ever happened to the old school?

Bulldoze, you can call yourself old school, you can call yourselves anything you want. Your music might be good, but the next time you play your song "hypocrite" take a deep, hard, long look in the mirror. Old school? No, I don't think so, just a bunch of bullshit.

Thank you
Jay Thought



Punk People-

How could you? You acquire a columnist who inspires nothing but awe, and you only give him a

guest shot?!? A one time slap in the face to the over-priced, ego-filled, know-it-all, definitely not punk medical profession? Shame on you... shame, shAME, SHAME!!!!

The first time that I read J. ALEXANDER PANIC's column, I nearly puked up my COCOA PUFFS. I was actually feeling something! It was something more than too much CASTER-OIL, it was on a whole 'nother astral plain of consciousness. It was far beyond merely the physical, it reeked of emotion.

By my twentieth read, I realized "hey, J. ALEXANDER PANIC is more than a columnist! Damn it! He's also my friend." During the sex parts, I was aroused as a canine rolling in shit. The funny parts made me giggle like a drunk fifteen year old girl, being seduced by her seventeen year old boyfriend thinking that, for the first time, she's falling in love. I found myself holding a razor to my wrist during the sullen, disturbing ending. Hoo-boy! If punk really is drowning in piss, you can sure the heck count me out, too (see PANIC's column in PP#4)!!!

"I can't wait 'til issue five!" I said to myself, bleary eyed and grabbing my weiner. Then my curious eyes found themselves staring at the column's header... J. ALEXANDER PANIC, guest column!! "Guest" my furry, shit covered,

dried-up-turd stinking, fuzzy, white ass!!!! ALEX PANIC should have the title to the fucking manor! Claim to the will! Keys to the MYSTERY MACHINE.

What I'm trying to say, is that Mr. PANIC puts the P in the PP, the punk in PUNK PLANET! As a matter of fact, PUNK PLANET isn't an appropriate name, J ALEXANDER PUNK PLANET would be a lot better choice.

If you must make a columnist a guest, make it that Larry Livermore guy. I mean, who the hell is he? Last I heard, he ran some little punk label in California. I even heard that he had something to do with those GREEN DAY sellouts! I guess he even put a seven-inch out by that MTV, Headbanger's Ball, Richi Rachman lovin', 120 Minutes hostin', ass-kickin' band RANCID. Does he belong in PP? Spike Anarkie is a wuss!!! It's J. ALEXANDER PANIC that puts the circle in the circled A!!!!!!

If sheer talent or shameless begging can't convince you to place J. ALEXANDER PANIC into the ranks of REGULAR columnist, maybe loyalty will. You had the fucker under the title PLANETEER! He should be one of you, not a guest! Give the man a little respect.

So, maybe he isn't on-line, still, he's a fucking PLANETEER!!!! He's not just some unemployed, letter-writing loser sitting at home jerking off while squinging between the squiggly lines of some scrambled porno channel that he can't afford!!! He's a real cool guy that deserves a bi-monthly column! C'mon PLANETEER's you don't want to lose him to MAXIMUM ROCK N' ROLL do ya?!?

As my final plea, (and an excuse to add even more exclamation points to this letter) all of you PUNK PLANET readers—write to punk planet!!! Demand that they give J. ALEXANDER PANIC a regular column!!!! If you do, he'll send you his list of the uncanny similarities between the bands RANCID and KISS. He'll explain exactly why RANCID are big sell-out dummies that should put on a bunch of grease paint and sing songs about Detroit! (Oh yeah, they already do sing about Detroit, that's just one of the many things RANCID have in common with KISS)! If you write a letter, begging PUNK PLANET to give J. ALEXANDER PANIC a column,

you too can find out the real truth about RANCID and get dang accurate predictions about their future!!!

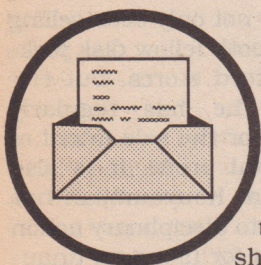
Make up for not voting! Do something useful! Throw out your OFF-SPRING records and be a real punk! Bring J. ALEXANDER PANIC back to the pages of PUNK PLANET! You're the ones who support it, PUNK PLANET is your fanzine! Make it one to be proud of!!!!

Sincerely,

J. Alexander Panic

PO Box 27202

Golden Valley, MN 5427



Punk Planet-

To begin with, I think your zine is great and it embraces all the things a zine should. Hence, a good one it is! The point of this letter is not to bitch and moan, but to rather inform others of a dilemma taking over "Punk USA" (he he). Bad jokes are great. Anyways, the common opinion about the south's musical abilities and its punk status are being less than good has got to stop. I'm not sure where I'm supposed to live in order to be considered a "punk" but I think Atlanta has more good punk points than bad ones. The majority of my friends are all in punk bands and we all work our asses off to get our bands exposed to more in this fast-moving and ever-so-friendly punk day and age. The problem lies with the jackasses who love to say they're from "Cally" and this makes them punker than thou. Poo-poo-poo-poo on you. I thought the musical content and meaning made a band great, not where they are from?! I'm aware that half of the citizens of Georgia are rednecks, but the other half are good people, really good people. Please believe me for the sake of not being punk, my heart belongs in Berkley.

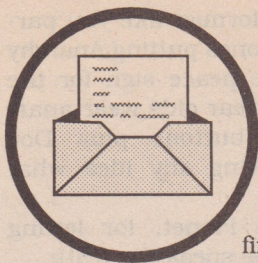
Thank you,

Jason Neubert

3620 Brookhill Cir

Marietta GA 3062

Ps. that last sentence was a joke.



Punk Planet-

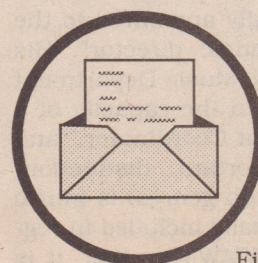
I just finished reading issue number 3 and was thoroughly pleased with your fine publication. I have been involved with the punk community for about fifteen years and I am a firm believer in the fact that the written and printed matter or this counterculture is what is holding it together. Without the communication of ideas and philosophies, as well as life experiences between allies of the same mindset, the system would fail and cohesiveness dissolved. This Culture has survived for an unexplainably long period of time without the aid of "professional" communicators. What I mean by that is there has been little assistance from magazines or T.V. shows whose purpose is to turn a profit, thus benefitting from mass marketing.

Unfortunately those times are at a crossroads. We are in a period where all of our values and ideals are going to be tested in the most severe way yet. Our world will be exposed like a bug under a magnifying glass to satisfy the quest for "cool shit". Because now it is profitable to delve into the counterculture to find the next marketing success. So hang on to your mohawks and batten down the spikes because there's a storm that's a comin' and the role of the underground printed material is about to become the shield from the thunder. And the more shelters that we have, the more we'll keep dry. Keep up the great work!

Sincerely

John Sybert

Eye 95 Records



Punk Planet-

I would like to respond to Jim Testa's column in #4 regarding "health care".

First of all, health care is an oxymoron. When you are healthy, you don't need care. What we have in this country,

and in the western world in general should be called "disease care".

Jim said, "People without health insurance are...less likely to take advantage of preventative medicine."

Let's face it, American doctors are not very interested in preventative medicine. To them, it means "don't smoke, drink moderately, and eat right." But ask 100 doctors how to eat right, and you'll get 100 different answers. Why? It's simple: they don't know. In fact, they don't care. They don't have time for such trivialities when they are busy prescribing antibiotics and hundreds of different medications for people's ailments. Take a look at how many old people are permanently taking a dozen different medications. High blood pressure? Take some of these. Manic Depressive? Take some of these and some of those.

It's funny that a proper diet in the right combinations can cure nearly any ailment: pneumonia, colds, arthritis, you name it. Occasional 7 day fasting does wonders for cleaning out the system. Acupuncture is great for many ailments, especially chronic pain and chemical dependency.

I have looked into traditional Chinese medicine and read several books on the topic, and practiced many of the methods. It all makes so much sense when it's explained, unlike most western medications, where they say, "take it, it's good for you."

If American doctors spent less time learning about pharmaceuticals and more time learning about health, then maybe health care wouldn't be so mysterious that it takes a festering bureaucracy of insurance men and politicians to regulate it.

It's funny that Jim mentions mental illness along with health care. Western dualism long ago decided that mental illness was somehow separate from physical illness. Psychiatrists don't even ask their patients questions about their diet. Instead they listen awhile, then prescribe Prozac, or Zoloft, or Riddlin. They get those people so stoned they don't care that their minds are so screwed.

In a short diatribe like this, unfortunately, I can't get into all the simple treatments available for specific ailments. I can, however, recommend a

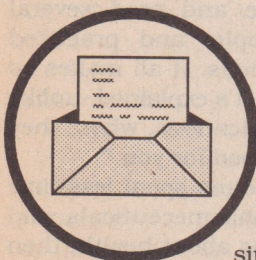
very good book called *The Tao of Health, Sex, and Longevity* by Daniel P. Reid.

The existence of medical insurance is perhaps one of the major inflators of medical expenses. If the rich people didn't have insurance, they would never allow a hospital to charge them \$6.00 for a band-aid, or \$1000 for a cast. Perhaps if it wasn't for insurance companies, we wouldn't need insurance.

But like American doctors, the American people are always looking for the "quick fix". So instead of demanding more of doctors and spitting on the insurance companies, we run crying to the politicians and call 1-800-ROCK-VOTE. Really, the politicians have never solved a single problem without creating a dozen new ones in the process, so why should I believe the "health care crisis" will result any differently. In fact, I truly believe that the less the government does for me, the better off I am.

Sincerely,

Mike, sleepy foot zine
PO Box 40453
Bay Village OH 44140



Hi Punk Planet

My name is Valeri Lira. Born in San Antonio, Texas, raised everywhere since the age of 5. I love Punk Planet.

I have a true story for you. While in San Antonio for a four month visit, I caught Rancid. Not caring too much for them, but just to see friends. A close friend of mine named Roland Solis (of the Sewer Rats) told me he told Rancid that they played a good show & he said they told him "Yeah, I know!"

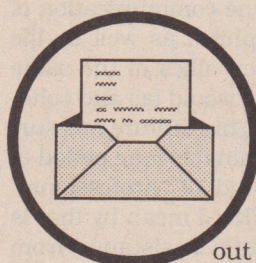
I don't know about you, but just because you're in a band doesn't mean you can shit on me. If Rancid told me that, I'd fuck up their trendy, 120 minutes showing, Headbanger's Ball going, harder core than thou, sellout selves. You shouldn't forget where you came from, even if you're from Califucknia. I live there, I love on Imperial Beach. As for Rancid, all I have to say is

Chickenshit Conformist like you parents. They're the ones putting Anarchy as trendy as the peace sign for the '60s. Making 12 year olds wear anarchy t-shirts & buttons plus Doc Martins, not having any idea what anarchy really is.

Thanks Punk Planet, for letting Punk Grrls like me speak the truth.

Valeri Jinx Lira

PMS. It's cool that all the shirts & 7" are cheap & postpaid. Shit knows punks can't afford anything. Later



Dear Punk Planet—

Included here is the text of a letter which I recently mailed out to approximately 150 labels. However, I think it could potentially be of interest and concern to both you folks and many of your readers.

Dear Label Representative—

I am sending out this memo as a cautionary warning to those labels who have previously, and/or are currently, servicing with promotional material WMWM 91.7, the Salem State College radio station. During the course of my association with said radio station, it is my belief that certain unethical and illegal practices have been transpiring on a regular basis which may possibly have an impact upon your label.

Foremost of these practices would be the obtaining of merchandise under false pretenses. Perhaps you have had dealings with this station's "Heavy Metal Coordinator," Derek Kouyoumjian? If so, he has probably represented himself as WMWM's "Metal Director"—however, this individual has never been officially appointed to the position of a "music director". His involvement in the Music Department has been strictly in the capacity of a "Music Department Coordinator," and this is an important distinction. "Metal" (and its sub-genres) is music which is not normally included in regular rotation at WMWM; rather, it is strictly "specialty" programming, which (for the most part) only gets air-play during Kouyoumjuan's specialty show

on Sunday evenings. As such, Derek Kouyoumjian's authority in soliciting promotional material extends only as far as music relative to this specialty genre—an authority he has overextended on a continuous basis. This might seem like no big deal, unless you take into account that evidently this individual's primary motivation for soliciting material does not seem to be in enlarging the WMWM record library, but rather to enlarge his own collection and his wallet's bulk. IN the course of my involvement with WMWM, it has come to my attention that Kouyoumjian has not only been selling these promos to both fellow disk jockeys and area record stores, but evidence suggests he has regularly solicited records for the sole intent of resale for personal profit. It is also worth nothing that Kouyoumjian has also been subject to disciplinary action within the station for using an unauthorized set of keys to enter WMWM offices and pilfer items. These actions transpired with the full knowledge of the Music Director, Julia Chadwick. I addressed this issue to her on numerous occasions, yet she failed to take any action, I eventually brought this matter to the Salem State College administration. Upon her finding out that I'd brought this matter to the attention of the administration, Ms. Chadwick promptly gathered together a handful of fellow WMWM members in a malicious conspiracy to oust me from the station.

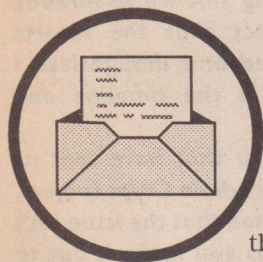
They may have temporarily succeeded in this respect, but they have far from silenced me. At this present time, Derek and Julia are still active members of WMWM—however, let me assure you that both the Salem State administration and police are actively investigating this matter. I have also retained the services of the M. Alexander Detective Agency and legal representation in order to hold these morally-challenged individuals legally accountable for their unconscionable actions.

Whatever the ultimate outcome, I wished to alert you to the possibility that your records, if sent to WMWM, potentially may not wind up enriching WMWM's listening audience, but rather the incomes of unscrupulous opportunists. If you have any ques-

tions, or wish further elaboration or information, you are more than welcome to contact me at (508) 744-3557.

As I lack the resources to relay this information personally to each and every party whom deserve a forewarning, I had hopes that if mayhaps you deem this letter worthy of printing, it would assist in relaying this information to the many smaller labels and bands who have been known to send promo material to WMWM. As you are no doubt aware, the presence of unscrupulous profiteers within the scene is nothing new (yet thankfully their numbers and impart have been relatively insubstantial until recent times), however, as commercial interests increasingly realize the potential profits to be reaped from the scene, it is integral that concerned scenesters remain conscientious—and, as appropriate—speak out against those parasites in friendly guise who would fill their coffers at the expense of our community and subculture.

With sincerity and Conviction,
Rev. Scott Miller
Editor of Crawl or Die!
PO Box 8531
Salem, MA 01971-8531



Hi Julia,

Your column in PP5 brought a few reactions from me. Now, I am with you all the way on the myriad of issues that fall under the PC category—I support and work toward the furtherance of each cause you mentioned (and some others as well), yet I kind of see PC as an issue of personal responsibility that has been distorted by media perceptions (of course with the help of many of our well-meaning but dogmatic sistahs and brothas in various progressive organizations or institutions) into this pseudo-fascistic trend. For me, it has always been a question of personal morality and personal strength to pay attention to my actions and particularly the language I use in my interactions with others. PC, at its inception

seemed to be just that—nothing more or less. In having this “other” directed outlook in all of my interactions, yeah, I’m going to “PC-police” myself in what I do and say—realizing all the time that everything I do and say has some kind of effect on other people and rather than make that effect some kind of mere reaction to me, why not think about my words/actions as tools for the development of healthy and respectful communication.

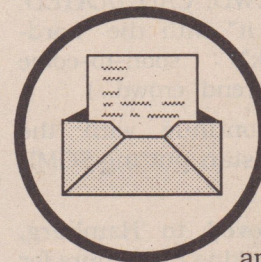
Perhaps an unspoken agenda on the part of the anti-PC backlash is to break the networks of interaction and reciprocal respect built by “PC” groups, “PC” communicating tactics or what have you.* I can certainly see the issue of personal freedom and one’s First Amendment rights to say or do ANYTHING (practically) and I’m also certain that many people are neither mature nor responsible enough to take direct responsibility for the effect that their words and actions have on others. Yet I do not see that it is any one group’s right to dictate and impose the structures and rules of communication and interaction for anyone else. Yeah, unfortunately, that is what PC has become.

Yet I still believe in the original motives and ideas of Political Correctness. Sure labels are bullshit, as you so rightfully pointed out but what if we could save the intentions and ideas of a community of equals without the tag, the flag or banner, that advertises our opposition to a consumer economy that isolates, neutralizes and alienates all peoples. Here is where I think the punk community and its ongoing debate on PC is essential. If we can teach ourselves about the effect our words and actions have on others, if we can instill in our own thoughts, words and deeds, a pride in seeking a mutual and equal interaction with others, and if we can keep these values D.I.Y., that in our own strength we will not have to force others to comply, perhaps we can keep the original good of PC without the gang-mentality, police-tactics of that PC popularly advertised and neutralized. We already have a strong community based on equality and mutual respect (sure there are debates, fissures, and divisions, but nevertheless a tight community exists) why not show the rest of

the world the power and the oppositional strength of a single face to face communication equally giving, equally receiving, equally mindful of the feelings, history, or thoughts of the other. It’s not as hard as it seems.

Thanks for listening.
Punk, out,
Eric Boehme
2634 N. Fairfield #2
Chicago, IL 60647

*It seems to me that it is in the interests of those Politically Incorrect to bash, divide, and conquer those that defend a PC agenda. A world built on MUTUAL respect and reciprocal interaction would almost certainly look much different than our current situation where we divide ourselves because of race, sexual preference, religion, sex, dietary preferences etc. An attack on PC seems yet another way of redrawing these lines of separation.



Punk Planet,

While I am very excited to know that there are other literate, well read punk rock types out there, I find it amusing that so

many of you letter writers

feel the need to quote one of the most arrogant (“Why I Write Great Books”?) pompous weenies in literary history. Besides, Nietzsche is just plain annoying. He’s more obnoxious than Whitman, but I guess Whitman was too patriotic for political punk types to quote.

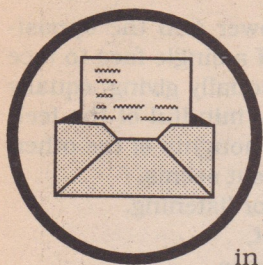
Gee Whiz that was stupid.

O.K. Punk Planet.

Um, Great fanzine. I just think it’s great.. except for when people write in with Nietzsche quotations. I love all of the “pseudo-intellectual babble.” Hey guys/ girls, don’t worry about it, it’s ok to express thoughts in complete sentences and correctly formed paragraphs, and even to use big prefix laden, multi-syllable words like “pseudo-intellectual.”

Of course I never thought that there was any thing “pseudo” about it. Yee Haw. It’s snowing.

AARON GEMMILL



Hey Punk Planet-

The Real Story Behind Crypt

Worked Oct 1978-May 1983 in record stores in Amherst & NYC earning \$2.50 to \$4.45 per hour.

First release: "BACK FROM THE GRAVE VOL 1" LP-August 5, 1983. (If yer unaware as to what this LP is, it's a GREAT collection of absolutely RAW mid-1960s U.S. teenage garage punk.)

1983-1986: Next 17 releases are MORE '60s punk & '50s rockabilly compilations. (During these years the label/myself are funded by dealing RARE 50s/60s 7" in the collector-scum market.)

Oct 1986: First MODERN release: Reissue of seminal 70s punk band DMZ. (Certainly a SHREWD, CALCULATED, release to "make it" with the "hard-core"/"College-rock"/ soon-to-come "grunge"/current "trend" crowd...)

1986-1989: Continue with the 50s/60s reissues, start putting SOME modern groups.

Jan 1990: Moved to Hamburg, Germany. Start booking Euro tours for our bands (from which we lose over \$23,000 on the first 8 tours AND NEVER DEDUCT A PENNY OF THESE LOSSES FROM BANDS' ROYALTIES which is the "industry" norm), getting connected with distribs in just about every Euro country. Our "warehouse" is a back-yard car garage with no heat, light, electricity. It's a "blast" packing orders on winter nights w/the help of a cigarette lighter.

April 91: We ask our landlord if he's got any warehouse-y rooms. He offers us a 7 room space with a streetlevel retail outlet... Oop! Guess we should open a record store... Which DOES make sense cos we can (and DO) take records from distribs that can't pay up, AND have daily income while WAITING for DISTRIBS to cough up their perpetually-late payments.

Our GERMAN bank is cool enough to allow us to run up to \$30,000 NEGATIVE per month (charging 14% inter-

est), which gives us more freedom with manufacturing costs.

We resume Manufacturing our LPs in USA to keep them from being higher-priced IMPORTS.

Dec 1992-Sept 1993: Manufacturing Costs run amok when our %&^# New Bomb Turks LP/CD ends up selling 20,000 copies and SCUMBAG U.S. distribs DON'T pay our US Distrib, GET HIP on time. (We are finally paid in DECEMBER 1994 for 5,000 copies sold to creep distribs in JAN-JULY 1993!)

Oct 1993-March 1994: I discuss RE-opening an American "wing" of Crypt to do DIRECT-TO-STORE business in the USA, via the help of ex-band members. We print up catalogs, get a KILLER list of stores, mail catalogs out to the stores. Of course, a maximum of perhaps 40 stores ACTUALLY do direct purchases from labels. (I, as a RECORD STORE operator, understand WHY: Paperwork!!) In the mean time we are unable to sell to a slew of distribs who STILL owe our prior distrib a shitload of \$... These factors PLUS the LACK OF SALES INCOME over the prior 10 months make it FINANCIALLY IMPOSSIBLE to afford to press up 3 new releases.

August 6, 1994: We sign a P&D deal (Manufacturing & Distribution) with MATADOR RECORDS for NORTH AMERICA. (We press and distribute all our European Sales copies OURSELVES.)

OUR deal is with a MATADOR owned & operated by CHRIS LOMBARDI & GERARD COSLOY. I've known and dealt with Gerard for 11 years. Chris I've known for years.

FINANCIAL ADVANCE: \$0.00

BASICS OF THE DEAL: We deliver FILMS/metal LP masters/CD-masters to MATADOR

They press the LPs & CDs in North America. They sell the LPs & CDs in N. America. Every 3 months, they pay us 75% of wholesale MINUS the manufacturing costs.

WHERE the fuck is the GREED or "SELL OUT" factor that MRR accuses us of?

If we were making those sales, we would receive 100% of wholesale, not

75%. We MAKE LESS "profit" on EVERY SALE. Does that smell of GREED? Our "profit" is that we don't get ripped off on sales to scumbag distribs. Our "profit" is that we can pay our bands their royalties ON TIME. Our "profit" is that distribs don't "cherry-pick" our more popular titles and ignore the "lesser" titles. Our "profit" is NOT BEING EATEN ALIVE by the MANUFACTURING COSTS of a (RARE!) title that DOES do well.

As soon as we start POLISHING UP our crude-ass releases, or start signing up "COMMERCIALY-VIABLE", "UNIT-SHIFTING" bands that are "hip" to the current trends, THEN we've SOLD OUT, and I'll be the first to admit it.

If you still insist to bad-mouth CRYPT, fuck yerself. I suggest you START YER OWN LABEL and BE TRUE to YER IDEALS, BE HONEST TO & BUST YER BALLS FOR YOUR BANDS. TRY TO DO WHAT I'VE DONE FOR THE LAST 12 YEARS.

Crypt Records

This letter was also accompanied by reprints of every mention of Crypt records in Punk Planet #5, as well as nasty little retorts to each mention. Due to the fact that I felt there was no point in re-printing shit we've already printed & the fact that the retorts were mean spirited and thoughtless, I chose to just print the timeline and closing statement.

For those of you that have sent us bags of mail on this whole Crypt subject, I hope you all can see that the issue isn't as black & white as you make it out to be. The debate rages on...

Dan Sinker

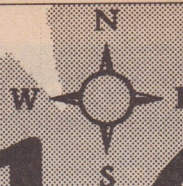
Hey kid, you look like you've got something on your mind. Why not write it up & send us a letter. It's fun & easy!

Just send it along to:

**Punk Planet North
PO Box 1559
Chicago, IL 60690**

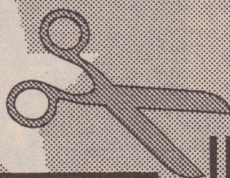
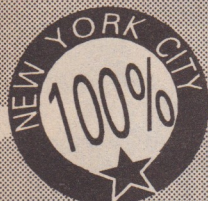
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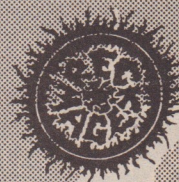
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"Newer and original hardcore here with intelligent lyrics and somewhat moshy music which strays often into Burn-like territory with some Slayer thrown in for good measure. This really stands out from some of the junk that is being churned out today." —Rebel #5

"Obviously associated with the Burn-meets-Quicksand mid-90's approach to progressive 'hardcore', Atlas Shrugged introduce an intriguing blend of textures and an incredibly tight rhythm section." —Anti-Matter #5

"Real good musicianship and lyrics, as well as nice packaging, make this a record that I think you may definitely want to check out. Some parts lean towards Burn pretty heavily, but they still have their own unique character. This is pretty solid in all respects." —Hardware #5

"The vocals are anywhere from sung to yelled-like-a-fuckman, in a poetic style not unlike Burn. The music is a wide variety mish-mash of Burn, Stabbe, Slayer and some old NY hardcore... yes, a nice blend indeed!" —Feast Of Hate and Fear #4

"Atlas Shrugged play semi-complex, chunky hardcore that reminds me a lot of Burn, which is quite okay in my book." —Sound Views #32

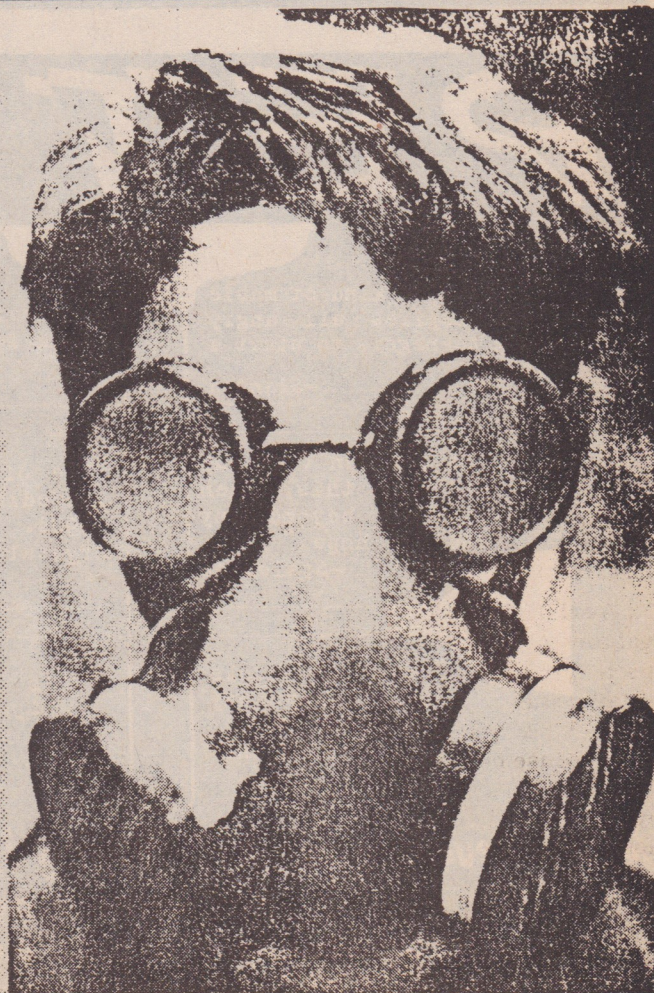
"KKKKK" —Kerrang (ba ha... just kidding).



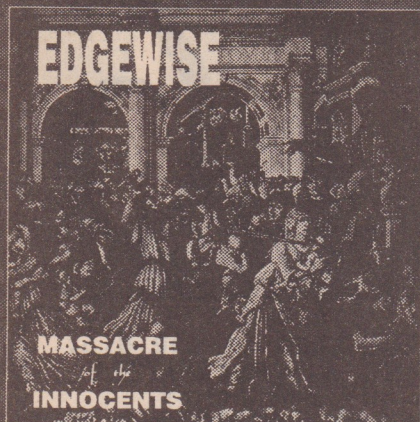
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Larry Livermore

Normally I don't stray too far from the cozy little Berkeley neighborhood where I live. Well, actually, it isn't that cozy: my room looks out onto an auto repair shop and just down the block is a very noisy fire station. And then there are the occasional muggings and shootings and the dozen or so beggars, passed out drunks and raving out loud lunatics I see during my daily walk to the post office.

But one thing that is cozy about my neighborhood (which is essentially downtown Berkeley) is that most of the Punks™ hang out somewhere else. Oh, we see some of their sorry pierced and tattooed asses stumbling up and down Shattuck Avenue with the rest of the bums, but most of the "real" (and therefore most annoying) punks hang out up on Telegraph or in Oakland or other such foreign lands where I have no need or desire to go.

So far removed from the "scene" have I become that a couple months managed to slip by without my running across that one-time bible of all the true punks, *Maximum Rocknroll*. What's even sadder is that I didn't even realize it until one day when I was talking to Ben Weasel and managed to annoy him by admitting that I didn't have any opinion about his latest column because I just plain hadn't seen it.

Now Ben is a very talented writer, and certainly one of the best people still contributing to MRR (though "contributing" is probably not the right word, since he told me straight out that he was doing it mainly for the money), and I felt a little guilty about not having kept up with his column. Ours being a respectable neighborhood, there are no stores that carry *Maximum Rocknroll*, so I realized that, like it or not, I would have to take a walk up to the depressing side of town where such publications are readily available to the weak-willed and feeble-minded.

There it was, neatly sandwiched in between *Spin* and the *National Enquirer*. I

thought briefly about how much more "punk" it would be to steal my copy, but then I thought about how unpunk, or at least unpleasant, it would be to wind up in jail, so siphoned off another \$2 from the scene, paid the corporate bookstore its blood money, and started home, happily reading the latest installment in Ben Weasel's never-ending tale of trauma, woe, and triumph.

And a mighty engrossing tale it was, too engrossing, as it turned out, because I should have been paying attention to where I was walking. Instead, I wandered blindly into a cul-de-sac where the gutterpunk congregate, and before I realized what had happened, I was being pursued down an alley by a howling mob of unwashed suburban refugees screaming "sellout!" and "mercenary!" (well, actually, I made up the "mercenary" part because I like the sound of it; in reality these kids have trouble with words over two syllables).

I rounded a corner and thought I saw a chance to escape, but just as I was sprinting for daylight, two figures leapt out from behind a dumpster, a burlap bag descended over my head, and everything went black.

The next thing I knew, I was being taken somewhere in a car. By now I realized who my kidnappers were from the sound of their voices, even though they were trying to disguise them: it was my arch-nemesis Spike Anarkie and his bandmate from the Fucken Shitz, Dirt Loser (all this time I've known him, and I just finally found out Dirt's last name the other day!). After about half an hour, I decided this joke had gone on long enough, so I said, "OK, Spike, this is pretty funny, but I've got to get home now."

"My name's not Spike," he growled in an imitation Tre Cool voice, "and you're not going anywhere until you answer for your crimes against the punk scene."

As I was just saying to someone the other day, my life becomes more like a comic book all the time. In fact I could have sworn I'd read something like this in R2D2 comic zine only last month. But Spike and Dirt seemed pretty darn serious this time. I struggled around in the back seat of the car, but they had tied me up pretty well.

But by wiggling around, I was able to turn my head enough to find a little hole in

the bag over my head, and get a glimpse of where I was being taken. We were in San Francisco, I could tell that much, and then suddenly I recognized a couple cafes and such: we were speeding through the streets of Noe Valley, a sort of middle class yuppie enclave just over the hill from downtown. What on earth Spike and Dirt would be doing there had me baffled until I remembered that Noe Valley was where the palatial mansion of *Maximum Rocknroll* publisher Tim Yohannan was located.

Now in the old days Spike and Dirt wouldn't be caught dead reading *Maximum Rocknroll* (or reading anything, for that matter), but everything seems to have changed lately. As you may have read here, it was recently discovered that Spike was the true author of the "Lefty Hooligan" political column, and as it turns out, Dirt has been responsible for most of the record reviews and letters to the editor.

This sudden change of loyalty had me puzzled, I must admit, until I heard about the \$150 "contribution" MRR had made to Spike and Dirt's fanzine *Fuct Thots*. Now, I don't know if you've ever "read" *Fuct Thots*—probably not, since the only issue that they ever did consisted of one page hand written on the back of old flyers and basically said something like: "Society is fuct and ur gonna dye." But I could see where \$150 might buy a good bit of loyalty from Spike and Dirt (not to mention about 100 cases of Scheissburger Beer).

Anyway, the next thing I knew, I was in one of the basement rooms of the MRR castle—I think it was the one where they used to keep Martin Sprouse before he escaped—and the bag was being rudely stripped off my head. The sight that greeted me was certainly one to behold. In front of me, seated at a long table, were three figures, each wearing a sheet over his head. What made it look even odder was that each of the sheets came to a point, apparently where it covered their mohawks.

Now I could tell the Spike and Dirt were the two people on either end, but I couldn't figure out who the person in the middle was. Until he spoke, that is: I'd recognize that high pitched cackling voice anywhere. Back in my own punk infancy I used to hear him every Tuesday night on *Maximum Rocknroll* radio: it was the father (and grandfather, and great-grandfather) of the punk scene, none

other than Tim Yohannan himself.

But what, I wondered, could that odd protuberance under his sheet be? In all the years I'd known him, Tim had never had anything remotely resembling a mohawk, and now suddenly it appeared he had sprouted one big enough to be in Rancid! (Note here to avoid confusion: Tim Yohannan and Tim Armstrong of Rancid are definitely not the same person.)

The mystery was solved moments later when one of Chairman Tim's scantily clad teenage sex slaves entered the room and asked him for money to pay the delivery boy who had just arrived with Tim's nightly dinner of greasy pork ribs. "My name's not Tim," he hissed at her as he reached under his sheet to extract a \$20 bill from an envelope marked "Official Punk \$."

"Should I tip the delivery boy?" she asked.

"Is he punk?" snarled Mr. Yohannan.

"Well, he has a piercing, and his hair is bleached," she replied.

"Then what the hell does he think he's doing asking for money?" Yohannan hollered, snatching back the \$20 bill. "He should be proud to contribute his greasy ribs to the punk scene! This magazine wouldn't exist if it weren't for greasy ribs!"

From upstairs I could hear the delivery boy protesting that he would lose his job if he came back without money for the ribs, and then came the sounds of him being bounced down the front steps. While this was happening, Tim opened up his styrofoam container of ribs and began greedily stuffing them into the hole where his mouth was. Before he could devour more than one or two, though, a terrible little chihuahua, apparently belonging to the teen sex slave, ran back into the room and tried to snatch Tim's ribs away from him.

Tim yelped in horror and tried to fend off his attacker, causing his sheet to fly off, and it was then that I discovered the terrible truth: he was wearing a foot-high prosthetic mohawk, the kind they sell to tourists down at Fisherman's Wharf and on Telegraph (it's part of a whole Punk Kit that they used to only sell at Halloween but now is available all year round).

I normally try to be polite where other people's appearance is concerned,

(considering my own appearance, it's the least I can do), but I couldn't help myself: the combination of the oh-so-serious look on his face and the oh-so-ridiculous thing on his head was so hilarious that I fell on the floor laughing.

At that point Spike and Dirt stripped off their own sheets. Spike yelled angrily, "This ain't no joke, Livermore, you're on trial here!" "Yeah," Dirt chimed in, "and you're fuckin' guilty!"

"Now, now, boys," said Tim in a more moderate voice, "let me handle this." He fixed his beady eyes on me and said in the sternest inquisitorial tone: "Now, Mr. Livermore, we all know that Lookout Records grossed a million dollars last month."

Spike and Dirt made horrible faces and echoed, "Yeah, that's really fuckin' gross!"

"No, no, boys," Tim replied, "we're talking about a different kind of gross."

"Or maybe we're not!" he suddenly thundered. "Because I think it's pretty fucking gross too! What we want to know is what you're doing with all that money to help all the punks?"

I thought for a minute, then pointed at Spike and Dirt and asked, "Are they part of all the punks?"

"Of course," Yohannan answered.

"Well, the only help they need is a lobotomy or a long session in reform school, either of which I will gladly pay for."

"This is no joke!" Yohannan shot back, and I had to agree that although it was ridiculous it really wasn't that funny.

"Every year," he continued, "*Maximum Rockrollingstone* publishes a full financial report that shows exactly where all the money went. Why doesn't Lookout Records do the same thing? Where's the meat?"

"Well, in the first place," I answered, queasily eyeing the pile of bones that Tim had made of his greasy ribs, "Lookout Records is vegetarian. There is no meat. Of which we're very glad."

"But it's interesting that you should mention those financial reports, because as you well know, they're more fictional than even the Lefty Hooligan column. That's just the same nonsense that you give to the income tax people."

"What do you mean, nonsense?" he sputtered. "Every penny is accounted for right here!" He pounded angrily on a pile

of papers at his elbow.

"Everything except all the cash that you hide under the floorboards instead of depositing it in the bank, you mean? And what's up with these thousands of dollars MRR pays for 'transportation'? Everybody knows that's the money that pays for your car that you use to drive one lousy block to go buy your corporate cigarettes because you're too lazy to walk any farther than the end of your driveway. Hey, maybe I'm a sell-out, but at least I pay for my own car."

"And gee, what's the rent run on this nifty little shack you've got here? \$1600 a month? Paid for by 'the scene'? And you live here all alone? While me, the big sell-out lives in a 10x14 room that rents for \$200? And that I pay for with my own money, unlike some people we know?"

For a moment, but only a moment, Mr. Yohannan was speechless. He gazed lovingly out into the next room at his record collection, conservatively valued at \$25,000, and his stereo equipment and big screen TV, and then turned his jaundiced eye back upon me.

"Yeah, but I work at a real job, I don't just live off the punk rock scene! That's why you're corrupt and I'm not!"

"Hmmm," I said, "there's an interesting concept. Apparently my job is not 'real' because we only sell records of bands that people like to listen to and enjoy. And what is it exactly that they produce at your 'real' job?"

Mr. Yohannan started mumbling here. Although he often likes to brag about how he has kept a "straight" job all these years so that he doesn't have to sponge as much money off of his magazine, he doesn't like it to be known exactly what the nature of that job is. Because, you see, his employer is none other than one of America's biggest nuclear weapons contractors, the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory (the local branch of, ha ha, the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory).

Oh sure, he only works in the mailroom, and as far as I know, hasn't handled any radioactive material lately, but for someone who's so determined to not let his beloved punk music be touched by anybody who was ever breathed upon by anything resembling a major label, he sure gets awfully selective about his morality when it comes to buttering his own toast.

"So Tim," I asked him, "you're telling me that my company is evil for selling Green Day records to people who really want them, while your company is OK, even though they steal taxpayers' money and waste it on nuclear bombs that nobody in his right mind wants?"

"That's different, you imbecile," he answered. "Nuclear weapons aren't the same as punk rock music."

My mouth swung open in amazement. "Do you mean to tell me you figured that out all by yourself? And you told me you never learned anything in college!"

"Yeah," he protested, "but I don't have anything to do with nuclear weapons, that's not my department. I only keep the job because the pay's high, I get free health insurance, and I've got this scam going where I only have to go into work for an hour or two a day."

"I see. So you're also ripping off the American taxpayers, just like your fellow defense contractors like General Electric and Bechtel and Martin Marietta."

"You're crazy!" he screamed. "Those guys steal billions every year from the public. I only get a few hundred bucks a week!"

"Well, Tim," I smiled sadly. "I guess it's time for you to hear my monthly literary anecdote aimed at illustrating a point that most people, including you, probably won't get."

"What's that?" he asked.

"Well, George Bernard Shaw was once at a party and he got into a discussion with some high class society lady about prostitution. 'We are all prostitutes to a degree,' he argued, and when she disagreed, he said, 'Well, wouldn't you consider sleeping with me if I offered you a million pounds?'"

"Well, I suppose I would," she allowed. At that point, Shaw reached into his pocket, pulled out a couple of wrinkled banknotes, and said, 'Look, here's two pounds; let's go do it.'

"The woman looked suitably shocked, and said, 'My good sir, what kind of woman do you think I am?' Shaw looked back and said, 'Well, we've already established what kind of woman you are. Now we're just haggling over the price.'"

Yohannan, Spike, and Dirt all sat there gaping at me. Finally Yohannan broke the silence to ask, "What the hell is that supposed to mean?"

"Anything you want," I said. "Now can I leave? I'm really tired of all this fun and games."

In unison the three of them yelled "No! You're not going anywhere until you answer for your crimes and pay back your debt to the scene!"

"Well, how can I do that? I suppose if I don't pay the bands the 60% of the profits that I've been paying them, and if I can sucker the Lookout workers into working for free and giving up their health insurance and make them take night jobs at Taco Bell to support themselves the way you do with your workers, I would have more money to give to the scene. And what the heck, I don't need money myself, I'm sure if I ever run out of money I can always come and live here with you. All right, who do I make the check out to?"

"Just make it payable to 'The Scene,' Mr. Yohannan said. "Don't worry, I can get it cashed, that's the name of one of my, I mean, one of the official punk scene's bank accounts."

Something seemed a little funny about this, though. "Wait a minute," I asked, "so are you saying that once I've handed over all my money to the scene, care of you, of course, that I'll be cool again? That I can go to Gilman and Epicenter and everyone will like me and tell me I'm rad?"

"Well, sure," he said. "Everyone knows that the punk scene is the most friendly and open-minded scene anywhere. They just don't like you now because you have too much money."

"Actually, Tim, apart from you and Spike and Dirt, I don't think a single other person has ever complained that I had too much money. I'm not so sure about this..."

The friendly expression on his face quickly faded. "You better kick down, Liv-ermore, or..."

"Or what?"

Tim seemed momentarily at a loss for words, but the ever-helpful Spike Anarkie burst in with "We'll have you Crawfordized!"

Tim winced; even after all these years, the sound of the word "Crawford" is like kryptonite to his ears. But I knew what Spike meant. Getting the Crawford treatment meant that you were banned forever from being so much as mentioned in *Maximum Rocknroll* or *Maximum Rocknroll*. I think the idea

came from the book 1984, where people who caused too much trouble became "unpersons" and were erased from history. Only a handful of people had managed to achieve that status in the 13 years that MRR had been publishing, and here it was being offered to me. And all I had to do was not give away all my money to "the scene!"

What a deal! I put my checkbook back in my pocket and said happily "Crawfordize away. I'm outta here!"

And as if on cue, I heard a great tooting of horns outside the gothically cavernous MRR mansion; it was a fleet of limousines bearing the rock star sellout cavalry come to rescue me! There were the Offspring, and Green Day, and Jawbreaker and Rancid, and they were all smoking big fat cigars and schmoozing with their agents, and they whisked me away to a splendid ball that went for days, where we guzzled champagne from shiny new Doc Martens and nibbled caviar (tofu caviar, never fear, fellow veg-heads) served up to us on platters made from our many gold records.

Occasionally amidst the hubbub my thoughts would stray to that dwindling band of pure idealists struggling away over at the spartan headquarters of *Maximum Rocknroll*, trying desperately to keep the punk scene alive while we rapacious capitalists were laughingly disemboweling and eviscerating it. And I thought back about some of the people who all through the 70s, especially when punk started happening, used to say, "We've got to keep the true hippie spirit alive! Don't sell out!"

Some of those people are still around, selling oregano-laced joints on Telegraph Avenue, and swearing that the success of Blind Melon proves that the hippies really are coming back at last. Others of them finally gave up and became punks and are standing around on Telegraph yelling "sell-outs" at anyone who walks by with more than 25 cents in their pocket. And ten years from now, their spiritual descendants will no doubt be hanging about trying to flog sixth-generation Operation Ivy bootlegs to gullible retro-punks. Who knows, maybe Timmy Yohannan and I will both end up side by side doing the same thing after the punk market crashes. Stranger things have happened and continue to happen in Berkeley, and that's just the way it goes.

Leah Ryan

When I was a kid, like seven or eight, my brother and I hung out at a used book and record store. It was in a second floor apartment on the main drag that ran through the middle of our town. I'll date myself and tell you that this was the early seventies. That block has since been turned into a walking mall, and rents have skyrocketed. I don't live there anymore.

The guy that ran the store was kind of a friend of our family's. His name was David; we called him David Bookstore. I don't remember the name of the store and only recall making one purchase there. I think I actually had some money and was determined to buy something. I don't think David carried any books that were to my liking. The only band that I was really into at that time was the Jackson 5. I also really loved the song "Honky Tonk Woman" by the Stones, and would have bought a Stones record, but I knew that it wouldn't go over well with my mom. She hated the Stones with a passion. It was her stereo, so that was out. After looking around for a while, I ended up talking a wild stab. Somehow I walked out with "Music From Big Pink" by The Band. I guess I liked the cover and thought the name was funny. Once I took it home and listened to it, I was pretty disappointed. Actually, I thought it sucked. I wasn't too upset, though, because I liked the store so much and enjoyed the experience of shopping there. I probably could have traded that record in, but I don't think it occurred to me. I still can't listen to The Band for more than 10 seconds. I don't imagine I'm alone there.

The next used record store that I was really into was in a different town. It was in the back of a barbershop. It was a real old shave-and-a-haircut kind of place from the era when where you got your hair done was strictly determined by gender (if you were female, you went to a 'Beauty Parlor', the end) I felt very self conscious walking

through the barbershop, which was small and was always steamy and full of middle-aged men. I was right on the edge of puberty, and felt like I had no skin on just about anywhere I went. The record store was literally about 6x6'. If there were more than two people in there, it was just unbearable. I have no idea what I bought in there. It was probably something embarrassing. I was in to Queen and Kiss and Led Zeppelin, of course. Unfortunately I also went through a Bay City Rollers phase. The good news is that pretty soon I was a full-on miserable adolescent, and the teenybopper music wasn't going to cut it.

That's where the next record store came in, and where "Punk" entered my vocabulary (and did not refer to somebody's little brother). In 1976, Punk was new to a lot of people. The guy that ran the store played a weird electric blue guitar in off moments; he had it plugged into a stereo amp behind the counter. There were Styrofoam heads hanging from the ceiling in various states of adornment (burnt, coifed with pick-up-stick mohawks, spray painted, and all of the above). Going to the record store became one of my favorite things to do when I was skipping school, which I did with increasing regularity until I was always either skipping or suspended for skipping. After I'd been going there for a while, the store's proprietor figured out that I did drugs (not too difficult) and he took to sharing a joint with me when I showed up there instead of homeroom early in the morning. In retrospect, I suppose this was sort of uncool, but to his credit, he never made a pass at me. I got in a lot more trouble in a lot of other places I went. Also, he wasn't corrupting me since I did drugs anyway. He ended up giving me a very beat up copy of the Grateful Dead's "Anthem Of The Sun", which had a story connected to it that I don't remember now (something about PCP, something about California, something about a beach....) As with "Big Pink", I found it pretty unbearable to listen to. I think that the gift had sentimental rather than musical significance. I have had a number of records like that; records which had some kind of sentimental or symbolic meaning but which rarely actually ended up on the turntable.

The exception is a copy of "Never Mind The Bollocks" which reportedly survived a fire in a group home for wayward youth that a bunch of my friends had lived in at one time or another. It was warped, but playable.

I ended up moving again in 1979 (another long story) and finding a number or other used book and record stores. At one point I worked in a restaurant that was sandwiched between one of my favorite bars and one of my favorite book and record stores. The store was run by two guys who also hung out at the bar. At all times, one was in the store and the other was in the bar. I ended up flirting madly with one of them until I finally got a coveted invitation to drink beer in the store after hours. I fled after the six-pack was gone. Not too nice. I know that they barely paid their bills, because in the bar they would tell me stories about how they found the money to drink that night: rolled pennies, change from under couch cushions, etc. Ironically, when I was in that predicament, I sold books or records to them.

I moved again in 1983 and I'm still here. I live in a small-to-medium sized college town full of book and record stores. I have a bookstore that I go to because I need to, but wish it weren't so because the owners are crabby to me even though I've been shopping there forever. They have a nice cat, though, which tips the scales in their favor. There are a number of other bookstores I frequent. My favorite is a small, dusty, basement joint that's been there for like 20 years. It has a real thrift-store feeling. Sometimes I don't find anything, but sometimes I score big.

I thought I'd never lose my passion for vinyl, but, to my regret, it has finally come to pass. I still like it, I just don't buy it as much as I used to. As far as record stores go these days, there's the one I love and the one I love to hate. It's pretty simple.

The other day, my main squeeze Dan and I were in a part of town that I don't usually frequent. We went into a used bookstore that I've only been in once or twice. There were two black cats lying around on piles of books and other important stuff. It only took about five minutes to find something I wanted for under \$5.00, but I could have easily stayed

all day. While he was ringing me up, the proprietor remarked that some people actually don't like cats. The idea seemed sort of scary and unpalatable to him.

When we left I told Dan that I can easily see myself running a place like that. He said he didn't have any trouble picturing it either. Of course, all my ambitions are linked to poverty. I'm a writer. Am I even entertaining thoughts of writing for television or anything? No. I can't even tolerate anything as practical as journalism. I have to write for the THEATER. I don't know what the actual statistics are on this, but I would guess that playwrights pay as many or more dollars to produce their own work as they are paid by someone else. I write fiction, too, but I'm not even that interested in the kind of mainstream publishing that actually pays anything. No, I like UNDERGROUND magazines...

David Bookstore is out of the book biz. He went to med school, now he works at a clinic in San Francisco. He's a doctor. Now I think of him as Doctor Bookstore.

I don't know if I'll ever actually have my own store, but our apartment is starting to look like one. Not only are there a bunch of packed bookcases, but there are piles of books that are waiting to be put away or to be put in a shopping bag, taken downtown and sold. I also have several boxes of books that I just got back after having them in storage for a bunch of years. When they leave the boxes, they'll end up in piles. Then there's the books under the bed. We have two cats, one of whom is only four months old and had already developed an affinity for the printed word. He sleeps in bookcases and on piles of books and likes to roll around in the newspaper.

If I ever do have a store, I'll want it to combine a number of the better attributes of some of my favorite stores. Cheap prices, good music, nice cats. Maybe some Styrofoam heads.



There is some fucked up shit going on in Washington State where a bunch of power-mad jerks are trying to censor music.

There is an organization that is fighting this called the Washington Music Industry Coalition. They are starting a new political action committee called Joint Artists \$ Music Promotion Political Action Committee (JAMPAC), so that they can have the power to lobby against these stupid laws. Dumb names, but an important purpose, because this censorship is stupid and scary. The following is a reprint of a chronology supplied by the WMIC:

January 1992 Washington Music Industry Coalition (WMIC) forms in response to indications from local politicians that they will attempt to put a censorship legislation on the books in Washington State.

Spring 1992 HB 2554, the "Erotic Music Bill" is passed into law. The law stipulates that it is illegal for minors to purchase sound recordings deemed by any judge in Washington state to cater to the "prurient interest of minors in sex." In the wake of the Washington legislation 14 other state introduce identical bills or amendments.

June 1992 WMIC forms a coalition with the ACLU and RIAA and many prominent Seattle bands to file for an injunction against HB 2554.

October 1992 WMIC's direct efforts result in the injunction of HB 2554. The lawsuit known as "Soundgarden vs. Eikemberry," is sent to the State Supreme Court on appeal.

November 1992 In response to postering ban threats from the Seattle City Council, WMIC contacts Seattle City Light and the Mayor's office to work out a cooperative arrangement wherein the music community will help keep utility poles from becoming over-postered. City and City Light officials offer no response.

January/March 1993 WMIC wages a successful lobbying campaign to block HB 1422, and attempt by legislators to mend the "Erotic Music Law" and over-ride WMIC's injunction.

March 1993 In response to several incident with Seattle police, fire and city officials WMIC is called upon by local promoters to help negotiate changes to the Seattle "Teen Dance" ordinance. The "TDO" is a city ordinance that outlaws any

all-ages" event, whether it is a dance or concert. Negotiations continue.

January 1994 The State Senate introduces SB 6003 new music censorship legislation, while HB 2554's constitutionality is still being decided in the courts. SB 6003 becomes known informally as "The Penisator Bill" in reference to a sexual device mentioned in the bill. No one, including Adam Smith's office, the office responsible for the legislation draft, can give a clear definition of a penisator. After extensive research, writer Dan Savage prints photographic proof of the penisator's existence in The Stranger.

February/March 1994 The Seattle City Council tries quietly to pass a postering ban without public discussion. WMIC and its supporters demand a public hearing. Despite compelling testimony from the music community, the Church Council of Greater Seattle, the Peace Heathens, the ACLU, Greenpeace, the Washington Coalition Against Censorship, and many others, the City Council passes the ordinance, even though they cannot substantiate their claim that postering poses a safety threat to line workers.

April 1994 The State Legislature passes SB 6003. Many Senators and Congress people who voted for the bill finally read it, decide it is too broad, and join the WMIC and other anti-censorship groups to lobby Governor Mike Lowry to veto SB 6003. Although there is still considerable political pressure to sign, Lowry vetoes the proposed bill.

April 1994 The State Supreme Court upholds WMIC's injunction of HB 2554 and declares the legislation unconstitutional. Justice Charles Smith's decision, however, maintains that the state does have an interest in protecting minors from "harmful" materials.

July 1994 Paul Russinoff, Director of State Relations from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) sends a letter to WMIC regarding the coming 1995 Washington State Legislative session. Russinoff notes in his letter that the "organized forces promoting censorship" in Washington continue to create legislation "designed to make Washington State one of the most inhospitable climates for free expression in

the United States." Russinoff continues "Washington State has been a laboratory for unconstitutional legislation where censorship proposals are not simply introduced, but can be expected to pass the legislature with relative ease...I have seen nothing which would make me believe 1995 will be any different."

November 1994 City officials establish a "noise task force" to establish a new noise policy for the city. WMIC begins lobbying for music industry involvement in the process.

January 1995 On the first day of the new legislative session State Senator Adam Smith, (D) Kent, and State Representative Mike Paden, (R) Spokane, hold a press conference calling for a legislative over-ride of Governor Lowry's veto and the passage of SB 6003. WMIC begins lobbying state Democrats to support the governor's veto and to block the over-ride attempt. Governor Lowry, fearing an over-ride, begins negotiating with the legislature's points on SB 6003 and two new bills are introduced: SB 5466 and HB 1448. The two bills are virtually the same as SB 6003. SB 6003 and SB 5466 both exempt libraries, schools and museums. HB 1448 contains no exemptions.

So anyway, what this means is Seattle is fucked, all-ages shows are illegal, putting up flyers for a show is illegal, and they are soon probably going to put in noise ordinances that make it possible to fine a club or impound a band's equipment for playing "too loud." And Washington is so fucked that the vast majority of our Representatives and Senators keep trying to pass this law that would make it illegal for anyone under 18 to buy records with "dirty words" on them, and the records would have to have a huge sticker on them that covers the whole front of a CD and they would have to be put in an "adults only" section, just like the porno section in your local video store. If you are under 18, how many of your favorite bands would suddenly be illegal for you to listen to. And the worst thing is, with this new swing back to conservatism and Republicans everywhere, a dozen or more states will probably pass the same thing instantly if it passes in Washington State, and it is highly probable that the US House and Senate would do the same for the whole country.

As I type this at the end of January the Senate is pushing through a veto over-ride on SB 6003. By the time you read this it will probably be the law in Washington State. Next month I'll give more info about "JAMPAC" and how they intend to fight these stupid evil laws.

Now for the good news: Team Dresch is the greatest punk band on the planet and their album is out now - available from Candyass, PO Box 42382, Portland OR 97242 or Chainsaw, PO Box 42600, Portland OR 97242.

P.S. Tim Yohannan is wrong about Bikini Kill. Read Lawrence Livermore's column this issue, it has some pretty good points.



Last summer I went to a show at a club called Tradewinds down on the Jersey shore. It seems to be run by the same people who run the Stone Pony. I went to see a band called Live; somebody wanted me to see them and I didn't have the sense to say no. The band sucked of course, but not as much as the buffed, preppie crowd. Relevant here is the fact that Live is a "nice" band; the crowd was far too "nice" to get rowdy.

Security at Tradewinds consisted of the same set of muscle head goons that makes it impossible to have fun at Stone Pony shows. That night they were grabbing kids left and right, usually for nothing at all, and hauling them out of the club. The drill was this: get some kid in a headlock, punch the shit out of him and knee him in the groin, throw him over the railing six feet to the pavement, then go back to get another one. I guess it's fun if you like that kind of thing; it made me sick.

A few of us tried to get some local cops who were standing there to intervene. The cops (of course) would do nothing. They were being paid by the promoter. Part of it is the whole complex psychology of authority which makes the

kids the bad guys in such a situation, regardless of the reality of what's going on.

And if you are in school or thereabouts, as most people at shows are, you have a seriously twisted idea of what constitutes appropriate behavior on the part of authority. School does that to you. Only after you've got a few years out on your own do you develop the expectation of being treated somewhat like a human being by the world around you. To the thugs working security, this meant they could get away with pretty much anything; the kids were used to getting treated like shit.

Anyhow, I left the show early, and my 60's-bred sensibilities about abuse of authority were all in an uproar. I wanted to make a big stink about it — sooner or later some kid would get killed. It was just plain wrong that that kind of thing could be happening. On the way home I thought about writing letters to politicians, cops, and newspapers. In the end I just posted something on AOL and got over it.

Fast forward to this past December. I read an article in the local paper: it seems that a high school kid from a local village got killed at a show in Brooklyn. The club was L'Amour, another place notorious for brutal security tactics. The kid was named Christopher Mitchell. He was 18 years old and lived in Pearl River, NY. He and some friends had gone to see a local hardcore band called Life of Agony.

The newspaper article was pretty straightforward, mentioning that the bouncers at L'Amour reportedly pushed Mitchell off the stage, but that the club denied that security was responsible. They also printed a couple of less-than-flattering quotes from the club manager, like "They don't beat them up unless they swing at them first." (Yeah, right...)

Accompanying the article was an interview ("Dangerous dance craze, page B2") with an EMS technician who had done first-aid work at Woodstock last summer. This was as close as the paper could get to someone who knew what went on at places like L'Amour, and it was pretty pathetic. (On the risk of "banging into each other so hard and so often," his comment was "You can squeeze your brain only so much.")

Basically the media, and the world in general, have no clue about what goes on at shows. It is a good thing, for sure. But we tend to forget just how foreign our world is to everybody else. We also tend not to realize the degree to which our scene is left alone by the rest of the world. Imagine, for a moment, what would happen if "60 Minutes" did a segment "exposing" the violence at shows. Mike Wallace undercover in the pit at a Queens show. "Mothers Against Stage Diving" pressuring the state legislature to put a stop to the violence. You get the picture...

After reading about what happened, and realizing that nobody was seeing the real problem and that nothing was going to change, I got this bug up my ass and decided I had to do something about it. First I stayed up all night writing this steaming letter to the editor of the local paper. The gist of the letter was that the real risk didn't come from music, moshing, or kids, it came from the brutality of the security people at shows.

Next, I faxed the whole mess off to the local music paper, the Aquarian. I was hoping they'd take an interest in the story and write an article at least. The next day, still steamed, I called the local paper and left a message for the reporter that had done the story. My message was that I wanted to talk to him about it all, and (deep breath) would he like to go to a show that night at L'Amour and see for himself what went on?

[The show was Biohazard — a lot like Life of Agony, but probably not a good thing to show an outsider, especially with the kind of crowd they've been attracting lately.]

At this point I was getting quite full of myself, but it got better. I got a call from the Managing Editor of the Aquarian — he read my stuff and would I like to do an article for them? (Just remember, he said, that local clubs are their biggest advertisers...) Next, the reporter for the local paper called, and couldn't go to L'Amour that night but he asked me a bunch of questions and wanted me to keep in touch.

[It turns out to be a shame the reporter didn't go, because we waited outside in the cold for two hours, at which point the club got raided by the NYPD and shut down. It was just like Kojak. It was also obvious politically-motivated bullshit, and

could have been part of a good story.]

I was starting to feel like an insider, and the feeling grew over the next few days, as the Aquarian guy called me a couple of times with tips about things he'd heard. I didn't realize it at the time, but somehow the feeling of being important, the sense of power, was starting to become my primary motivation. I wanted to see my name in print, to be the one who righted this wrong. I was going to single-handedly save innocent kids' lives, and even save the music scene itself from being regulated out of existence. The issue itself was still important to me (it still is), but what was more important was that I was getting a huge ego boost out of my involvement.

It's worth noting that all this happened very quickly. I did nothing except make a few phone calls and write a couple of letters. The grandiosity was largely in my mind, and was based almost entirely on fantasy.

It was also VERY easy to slip from being motivated by a desire to do something constructive, to being someone motivated largely by self-promotion. I cannot emphasize strongly enough how insidious this process was. It could very easily have led to me being some sort of bullshit-filled "spokesman" for a subculture (in our crappy local paper at least), whose primary purpose would have been to help sell newsprint. I guess reading endless articles about bands selling out to major labels must have had an effect, because there was this little voice telling me to step back and take a look, and I did.

Anyhow, what has happened since is that there was a brief flurry of media attention — a series of reports on the New York TV stations "exposing" the story, which has since vanished without a ripple. The local paper printed a mangled version of my letter to the editor, a couple of weeks later. They also did a follow-up story, saying that the parents of the kid that was killed have hired a couple of lawyers, and that they hope "the state can raise consciousness on the dangers, perhaps through legislation."

I haven't written the article for the Aquarian, and I don't think I'm going to. I've had no more contact with the reporter for the local paper. The whole issue will probably just fade away, at least until the next kid dies. And I'm back to being a clueless

loser like everybody else.

Meanwhile, I've attained a whole new level of cynicism about people who take on causes, in particular about their motivation for doing so. I'm much more suspicious of (and sympathetic towards) people whose names keep popping up in the media as spokesmen for you and me. I also have a new respect for bands — anyone actually — who are able to resist being seduced by fame. It's hard.

Karen Fisher

It's a horrible secret I must share with you now. It's been two and a half weeks since I moved here to suburban Detroit, and I've pretty much been sitting in a dingy apartment the whole time. I don't have a car yet and the bus system seems to be pretty sucky. I'm sort of looking for a job. I'm getting pretty serious about it; I've looked in the newspaper and everything. But part of me doesn't want to start working or even go outside anymore. In this short time, I think I've become addicted to daytime TV. Please don't condemn me, I am disgusted with myself, too. I hate all the shows, and still I sit here and watch them; for a few minutes anyway, when I become repulsed enough to change the channel and watch another one for a few more minutes. But for some unknown reason, I can't turn it off. Throw in a little soap opera action and the Weather Channel as I zip through the spectrum, over and over, and I've got a full day of mindless entertainment. Before I know it, the whole day is gone and I'm even more depressed and I vow not to turn it on the next day. I swear, this time I mean it. Then the next morning rolls around and I think, "I'll just turn it on while I'm getting dressed, just to keep me company." Sigh.

Maybe it doesn't seem so bad if I explain to you my quest. It's sort of a sociology experiment. I am searching for the entertainment value in these "talk" shows, wondering why there are so many of them and, even more curious, why there are so

many people who would want to get up on a stage and have host, co-panel members, and audience alike rip them to shreds. Most of them have done such incredibly embarrassing things that if I were them, I'd probably move away from anyone I knew to start my life over again (come to think of it, I did have to do this once, and I didn't do anything half as bad as some of these guests have done). I am truly convinced that all of these people are actors and they have all been provided with scripts and personas, fully calculated to elicit the biggest shock among us, the gullible viewing public. The host looks oh, so concerned while the teenager's mother sobs, telling the sad tale of how she discovered her daughter's bisexual/satanic secret identity, and the daughter interrupts, defiantly stating her right to do whatever she pleases, while members of the audience scream objections to both of them: "Mom, get a life! Forget your daughter, don't let her ruin your life, too!" Hoots of agreement, loud applause. "Child, God's gonna punish you for the things you done to yore poor mama!" hollers a semi-toothless grandmother, barely able to pick her enormous body out of her seat. It can't be real, I keep saying to myself, trying hard to watch and listen for something that will give it away as the scam it is. Why do 90% of the guests have deep southern accents? C'mon, it can't be real, can it? I'm going to expose them, mark my words!

No wonder I'm so depressed lately. If these shows which take up at least half the programming day are what the people want, that's bad enough. But to think that the guests and even the audiences of these talk shows are representative of mainstream America is too, too frightening. There is no hope at all for our future if this is the case. We are totally screwed. There are no redeeming qualities to these people (half the time they cannot even grasp the fact that their behavior is totally unacceptable), and no relief in sight for those of us who must live in the same country with them. The worst part is, these are the kinds of people who endlessly reproduce, perpetuating their cult of ignorance and insanity so that we will soon be outnumbered, if we aren't already. For example, the devil-worshipping teenager in the story

above has four kids by three different men (I think one of them was her uncle). But now she thinks she's a lesbian.

I know! I know! I'm just as bad for watching it, even if I jokingly try to explain my reasons for doing so ("I'm lonely! I'm bored! I was abused as a child!") (not really as to that last one, I'm just going with the flow). Hmmm, what would it be like if I woke up sitting in a chair on a stage somewhere, bright lights shining in my face...

"Our next guest is Karen! What would make a talented girl screw up her life over and over again? Do these kinds of people even bother to make excuses for themselves? Welcome Karen, everyone!" Thunderous applause. I'm overwhelmed. I look sheepish as my face appears on the monitor, with a brightly-colored bar underneath and my caption: "KAREN: Doesn't understand how life works." Ricki! looks worried about me and raises her hand to her chest. "Now, you went to college right out of high school, Karen. Why did you declare your major as fine art and then never take a fine art class?" I fidget nervously in my seat. The audience is snickering at me. "Uh, well, I was taking some general ed. classes..." I begin as Ricki! nods understandingly, "and I didn't go to some of them, so I was placed on academic probation. And the notice I got in the mail said I should see a counselor immediately if I didn't want to be expelled. But when I got there, the counselor wondered why I'd made an appointment with him; he seemed mad that I was disrupting his busy schedule. Um, so I told him I wanted to change my major." Ricki! places her hand on her chin and rubs it thoughtfully. "So you picked fine arts. Because you wanted to be... an artist?" I squirm again. "Well, um..." I begin. A dark-haired boy in the audience who looks vaguely familiar leaps to his feet and points his finger at me. "You and your roommate were sluts! You spent all your time partying and taking boys home to your dorm room! You slept with me and three other boys on my hall!" The blood rushes to my face now, my eyes start to tear. I honestly can't remember this guy's name or whether I slept with him or not. No wait! I think maybe he's the guy who put on an album by "Poco" to get me in the mood (his

words), which only caused me to start laughing uncontrollably and leave. I'll bet he's just angry that I spurned him. I feel somewhat relieved. I ignore him and try to bring the subject back around to the fine art thing again. "Well, you know, I am a creative person, and I do like to draw..."

All of a sudden Geraldo! is in my face, with a microphone. "So, because you got such a bad reputation your first year at college, you decided not to go back there! You must have been one bad punk rock party girl!" The audience goes nuts, whooping and giving me catcalls as Geraldo! smooths his shiny dark hair. The caption underneath my face changes to "KAREN: Wild nights of drinking, drugs, music and sex kept her from getting an education." I look around frantically, hoping for someone else to take the heat for a minute, but it looks like I'm the sole topic today. "Hey, um, that was a long time ago!" I exclaim righteously. Sally Jesse! takes the stage, and introduces her staff psychologist who's just written a book on a similar subject. Sally! wants the good doctor to give me some advice, but I interrupt her to tell her I've already tried the therapy routine and it only made me worse. All he did was ask me what I thought I should do. I didn't know what I should do! I wanted him to tell me! That's why I hired him! Hmm, I guess I got a little bit excited there—I found myself on my feet, screaming at my tormentors. But I feel justified, and I'm sure everyone here now understands me a little bit better. At least they stopped screaming at me. Why is it so hot in here?

WHUMP! the psychologist was apparently offended by my outburst and has tackled me from behind, wrestling me to the stage floor. I'm fighting back, holding my own. The audience loves a good cat fight and they're on their feet, screaming for blood. Oprah! is trying to bring an air of calm and homespun decency back to the proceedings by telling us a story about her grandmother, but it's way too late for that now. Suddenly a hush falls over the sound stage as Donahue! enters from the wings. His theme song blaring, he slowly strolls down the aisle toward me, index finger to his lips. He's staring me down and I admit, I have to look away under his strong yet sensitive gaze. He looks at me intently and

sends me a challenge: "Is it true that you married the first guy to ask you out on more than one date? And you met him when you were only 19 years old???" I gulp and admit my naiveté, but quickly explain that I was later divorced, and then went back to school for a while. "And did you graduate?" Donahue! booms into the mike. I look down, silently. His big white eyebrow shoots up. "Just how many colleges have you attended, young lady?" I know the answer: seven; but grip my lips tightly together. I will not give him any more ammunition. I glance apprehensively at the monitor. Just as I'd feared, my terrified face now bears the caption: "KAREN: Perpetual college dropout and all around loser." I start to sweat and feel kind of dazed. I look around, helpless, at the jeering faces swirling before me, their groaning becoming louder and louder, while the sympathetic hosts get closer and closer. I'm feeling a little bit faint...

BOOM! My chair falls back onto the stage... oops, ah, I guess I started daydreaming. I'm in the living room, TV still going strong. I'd better turn it off and go write a column for Punk Planet. Well, okay, five more minutes. Then I'll turn it off for good.

I really gotta get a job.

Will Dandy

1) I'm home from school sick today; sniffing, coughing, sneezing, blowing more mucous out of my nose in a day than I thought anyone could have in their life, and trying to relax. It's a sickness that I would say is almost self-induced. Every night for months I've been staying up until 2-3am to finish my work for this zine, the record company my friend and I do, or the ever present load of school work hiding around the corner. Indeed, right now my AP Physics class should be convening for yet another hour and thirty minute class of electronic fields, Gauss' law, capacitance, and other things that no one in the room understands in the slightest bit. No matter though, it all gets drilled in our heads at

some point and we can walk away having a vague idea of what just happened, dreading the up coming test of Satan. So, why am I writing this? Well, I'll tell you (oh boy, oh boy!). Nowadays I get the feeling that no one takes the time to breath anymore. No stopping to smell the roses. Just grow them, cut them, and sell them. Never mind what made them beautiful in the first place, let's just churn 'em out like appliances for money, money, and even more money! Maybe if you give one to your girlfriend you'll get laid! That's all that matters anymore isn't it? Sigh. No one has fun anymore. The only time you'll ever find anyone taking a time-out is in a athletic competition. Personally, I'm tired of the rat race. I've been placed in the "fast lane for success" by society and I'd really like to move to the slow lane, but there's a big eighteen-wheeler in my way. All my life I've been taught to work my hardest, try my best, so that one more perfect little kid can be CEO at IBM or something and make enough money to make their whole family happy. Does anyone ever stop to consider what the kid wants? I really don't think so. Recently some of my friends and I have been trying to find little detours from the fast lane. Even though we always end up right back where we started a break is the best thing in the world. What do we do? We drive to places that we've never been before and try to find something interesting that perhaps everyone else in the world has been too busy to notice and has overlooked. Just the other day my friend and I stopped at a playground in some old town who hadn't updated their toys in a while. They were all the kind that we remembered from our childhood, and we played on every-single-one-of-them in a glorious three-hour time period. It's our way of escaping, if only for a little while. We can be ourselves, go crazy, and not have a care in the world. That's what life is all about I think. Unfortunately no one seems to care.

Next year, when all my class mates will be headed off for college, I will (hopefully) be taking a year off. That is, if my parents can ever understand me. Sometimes I think they just refuse to look past the numbers and see who I really am. Hey look! Will's got a 3.62 GPA and a 1360 on the SAT's! Let's ship him off to college as soon

as possible! Who cares if he's not ready, with those scores he could do anything he wants in life. Except take a break that is; and that's all that I want. I've worked my butt off for 17 years of my life now, and I think I can handle a little vacation. How can this country really be filled with so many people that just work and spend their lives doing stuff that doesn't really make them happy? Somewhere, somehow, something has really gone wrong in our society. I just can't believe that we'd rather have a nation of intelligent robots than one of smart (as in from living life to it's fullest, not from school), caring people. Especially since people are willing to work much harder for something that they care about than one they don't. Why do you think I stay up so late at night or force myself to become sick? Because I LOVE what I'm doing. I love this fanzine and would gladly lose a few hours of sleep at night and a little physical well being to keep it going.

I've been sick for two weeks now without missing school though. Silly isn't it? I force myself awake for classes that don't really tell me anything I'll ever need in life or anything I don't already know, just so I can get off to a good start in life. That's what being in the fast lane means to me. The fact that in my four years in high-school this is only the fifth day of school I've ever missed from sickness. The other four came when I had mono last year. It was at the point last year when I was afraid to miss school because of how far "behind" it would make me. Now I realize that that is just not the case. What's one day of missed lectures and quizzes in life? Now, don't get me wrong. I am very much for education as a whole and I do plan on going to college after my year off, I just don't approve of the whole shove-it-down-your-throat method.

Sigh. Where did this all start? Ah yes. The fast lane. Well, I'd write more on the subject, but I really do have a lot more work that I need to do. He he he. Really though. Take a break and enjoy life every once in a while, as those great masterminds at Burger King (or is it McDonalds? Eh, who cares...) say "You deserve a Break Today."

2) Last issue I wrote about that zany question, "What is punk rock?" Surprisingly (to me), I actually got some responses from neato people and had good thoughts

given to me by all of them. I've made a decision though, not about what type of music is punk, but what punk is. What I think separates punk from any other type of music is that it's more than that. Punk is a community, a way of life, a feeling, an emotion. Yep. That's what I've decided on. Punk is an emotion, that's why you can't describe it (just like love or something), and if you ever really have it, then you can never lose it. I first realized this when I read a quote by Brett Gurewitz (Oh, stop your groaning; some of us like Epitaph, but I'll get into THAT later) of ex-Bad Religion fame and such, "To me, punk rock is a feeling, it's in my bones. It's in my fucking marrow. I can't explain to you what it is. That's just the poverty of the language. It's a feeling you can't define." I think that sums it all up. Now what is punk music? Music made by people who have that punk emotion. I think that that's what the unifying feeling in punk is. Maybe that's why it's so easy for punk to be so diverse, yet one listen and someone can somehow way, "That's punk!" or "That is crap, get rid of it now; those damn poseurs!" Well, that's what I think at least.

3) Now on to Epitaph (who has graced us with the lovely flexi record to be found in this issue). There's been a lot of talk about Rancid going major and The Offspring being on MTV and selling millions of copies. Well, although the former isn't true, there is no denying the latter. I have two points to make here. First off, I don't think that The Offspring doing so well means they have sold out or anything of the sort, although I must admit I think their new album is trash, and their old one just a bit better. I think that their success just serves as a big middle finger to the whole corporate rock scene and shows that bands can stay indie and still make lots of money without losing their integrity. It also shows that the old excuse of "We went major for better distribution" or "We were just drawing to many people to shows" is also a bunch of shit. Personally I salute Epitaph for being so smooth and not losing sight of what got them where they are now.

4) My friend and I are still selling that double 7" of ours. It is a **HARDCORE** (get your attention?) compilation so, um...buy it if you like hardcore, ok? It's got unreleased songs by Capitali\$t Casualties, Mankind?,

Terminal Disgust, F.Y.P., Spazz, Masskontroll, Quincy Punx, and Oppressed Logic. They cost \$5 each, ok? And if you must use checks, make them out to "Will Killingsworth" NOT Dandy. Yes I know my real last name rules; thank you. Te he he. But the new news is that we have a PO BOX now! So, send all your orders to: Clean Plate Records; PO BOX 2582; Birmingham, AL 35202. Distributors; we always are looking for help.

5) Last, but not least. My zine is still going along groovy. The first and second issue are sold out though due to the responses that I got (unexpectedly) from my last column and the review in here. The third one should be out now, and is available for \$1 from me at the southern address of this fanzine. I can no longer do the "good letter" bit because I'm broke, and too busy to respond, but one would be appreciated. So, order the third issue of "Oh Well..." today! It's just a whole bunch of personal ramblings that I swear to God are neat, even if Matt Wobensmith doesn't like 'em (see review this issue). I've had some people tell me #1 was much better, and others same #2 was much better. Go figure.

6) As always, reach me at the southern address or e-mail me at "WillDandy1@aol.com" Ok?



**COLLEEN + INTERNET =
LOVELOVELOVE**

For those of you that had the immense pleasure of reading my last column, there were a few details I left out about romancing on the internet. The day after I finished the column, Colleen (Miss Internet 1994) enlightened me on a few sumptuous extras. The uninhibited gentleman who brought himself to orgasm with Colleen as a witness via Ma Bell asked her to send him a pair of her underpants. "And please don't wash them!" he panted. I've been pressuring her to send him her black satin g-string but she stubbornly

refuses. I just don't understand why she is negating his advances. She's probably a lesbian or something.

One of the two young chaps whose company we had to endure while watching Reservoir Dogs was quiet and shy and was nursing an unrequited love for Colleen. We'll call him Li'l One. During one of his numerous phone calls to Colleen, he confessed an almost lifelong secret that he hadn't even told his parents: when he was but an underdeveloped tadpole, he was molested by a neighbor. After watching Reservoir Dogs that starry, starry night, Li'l One drove his persistently annoying friend, Mr. Destined-To-Be-Strangled-By-An-Irritated-Emotionally-Unstable-Coworker, home and came back, uninvited, to Colleen's room where she was playing hostess to a girl named Eileen and our friend Chris. The four of them sat back and talked for a while about the burgeoning scene in Nebraska (bad joke). In the middle of their conversation Chris (not knowing who Li'l One was) blurted, "So, Colleen, tell us about the guy that was abused as a child ho ho ho." Afraid to look Li'l One in the eye, Colleen fumbled a reply, something to the extent of, "No, uh, you got it wrong. There was this guy, you see, yeah yeah, that was, uh, beat up when he was a kid. And uh..." Chris was, of course, duly confused. "But I thought you said-" Anyway, to keep a long story short, it was mayhem.

Shortly thereafter, Eileen and Chris left, leaving Li'l One sitting on the floor with Colleen and opening the golden gate to their romance (ha ha just kidding Colleen). Colleen offered him a chair whereupon Li'l One stood up and said, "No, that's OK...", grabbed the wooden support slat for the top bunk bed with both hands, and flipped his legs through his arms. "...I'm more comfortable this way. I used to be in the circus." Colleen was flabbergasted.

SKINHEADS + ANYTHING = DISASTER

On January ninth of this year, I went to the only show I was interested in seeing over Christmas break. On the bill were Blownapart Bastards, Los Crudos, and Oi Polloi. At the beginning of the show, my sugarsnookumpumpkinpie Shane nudged me and said he was keeping an eye on the skinheads to make sure they didn't cause

any trouble. They acted up surprisingly little during the first two bands; perhaps they hadn't drunk enough beer. By the time Oi Polloi took the stage, they were sufficiently tanked to be up to form. Since I'm going to be writing a full story about this show in my zine, I'll just give a few highlights of this lovely evening action-packed with overgrown spores making spectacles of themselves.

One particularly entertaining moment was when they busted out into a spontaneous chanting of the pledge of allegiance. Or should that be The Pledge of Allegiance? Much of the rest was quite predictable: shouts of "U-S-A!" x 100, "skinHEAD!" x 5000, bonehead strutting, testosterone-filled "dancing", etc. A few fights broke out with ensuing mass chaos (typical) with me, Shane, and our friend Jose on the eastern front, putting our lives on the line for the sake of peace. Har. However, at the peak of this chaos, everyone in the Fireside bowl (where the show was taking place and which, incidentally, was rated by Sassy magazine to be the fifth coolest place to hang out in Chicago) began shouting "Get out!" at the socially maladjusted baldies. Ah, what a magnificent sight. I'll leave you in suspense here as a thinly veiled marketing scheme to get you to buy my next zine.

OJ SIMPSON + SENSATIONAL MURDER CASE = WHO THE FUCK CARES?

ME + PROJECT PROCRASTINATION = DESPERATE ATTEMPTS TO SELL OBSOLETE MATERIAL

The 1995 Dumpsterland/Nice Hair calendar is now available for \$2 and a nice letter. Nice LONG letter. Nice long PERSONAL letter. If there is one thing that is universally hated by zine editors across the globe, it is a letter that says, "Yeah, dude, like, send me yer zine. Oh, and I didn't send you any money cuz I don't know how much it costs. Duh." Here are some handy dandy tips to ordering zines: 1) If a price isn't listed for a zine in a review, at the very VERY ROCK BOTTOM LEAST send some stamps. Sending no money nearly eliminates your chances for ever getting anything more than a hostile, fist-shaking letter in reply. If a zine is "free" (nuthin's free anymore in this cruel, cruel world), send stamps anyway. You will be loved. 2) Write your address on both the envelope AND the letter. The nice long personal letter

Zine editors are flakes and, if they handle their own distribution, get a bit muddled up. You could attempt to argue that I am the only bumbling idiot of a zine editor in the world with enough gall to request this sort of thing but I dare say that I would find that hard to believe. 3) Don't write a check out to the name of the zine or to the zine editor with the kick-ass punk rock pseudonym. This is equivalent to sending no money at all. However, you may be graced with a bomb delivered to your doorstep via UPS (Unthoughtful Pet Smashers, to use a favorite childhood acronym translation).

Well, that's all I can think of at the moment but I would like to think that these three golden rules are common sense. Alas, I suspect my expectations for the world are too high. Sigh. Anyway, too-dle-loo till next time. Remember:

**ANY IDIOT WITH A GUITAR
+ HASTILY CONSTRUCTED IMAGE =
COOL PUNK ROCK STAR**

order calendars (\$2) and zines (\$1 + 2 stamps) from and send adoring letters to: URH 122 Saunders/906 W. College Ct./Urbana, IL 61801 (during the school year only) talk to me, baby, talk to me at: k-bae@ux5.cso.uiuc.edu

**Dave
Hake**

So this is what's up with me: I'm a bad kid. I'm a bad, bad kid. I am getting my columns in later and later by leaps and bounds. I thought collection agencies were bad, just try and cross Dan Sinker. You can't tell him you'll pay up later. Before you know it you'll be living, eating and breathing the kid. In honesty, I'm even more sorry for bringing up this whole sob story. We call it in the land of Hake, "introductory paragraph, add water" where creativity is wanting. In the spirit of self-criticism, I concede that you don't give a fuck how I go about doing this, much less why or in what time it takes me. I'm just a bad kid. So shoot me. Much to the disappointment of

several close friends, I paid \$8.00 to see SNAPCASE in Albany this holiday season, but despite the grueling circumstances (bad rock club scene, bad bonehead scene, bad holding-onto-a-chainlink-fence-(don't-ask)-to-save-my-life-scene) it was totally worth it. I even bought a cheezy SNAPCASE shirt screened in a kind of Fruit Loops color scheme for \$10.00, you know, just to further confirm my inherent weenie status. Saying you're into SNAPCASE is the hardcore equivalent of saying you're into the Cosby Show I realize, but even the Cosby Show had it's novel moments in the beginning. My relationship to hardcore: if it it's macho and there are severely unresolved penis problems, I'm there. That's just me. Anyways, in Minnesota, Hake says February is the honorary month of despair (references to yourself in the third person hint at delusions of grandeur, I can only hope). Hence the theme for this column: self-consciousness and the onerous beauty of self-deprecation. Hake sucks, this is the most important thing you can think about right now (two for two, I'm halfway to self-realized cult of personality, you know). Crybabies 101. Woe is me. Put a gun to this mouth, baby, and pull the trigger. Oh yeah. This is the month where mad flights out of the state, disavowing any association with your "loved" ones (you Minnesotan kids fucking rule, oh, and how) is a very, very attractive scenario. This time last year I was all set to escape my two lovely roommates for a life of cutting fish in Alaska for several months. You've probably heard of these "chances of a lifetime". If you can find a job in the lower forty-eight that will let you work a hundred hours a week in the midst of total cultural isolation, it's just as lucrative and grueling. Proletarian dreams of martyr points all a floating in my head, I wised up and spent my saved money on a record store called Extreme Noise. More self-deprecation coming this way: I'm sorely in need of an editor. Did you check out last issue's column? Optimistically you can call some of what I call "grammar" as "being creative with English", but more likely just run-on sentences. I know it, I'm a bad kid, and you kids fucking rule. Go ass crazy.

1. In a column from a few MRR's ago, Joseph Gervasi did an interesting bit on emo kids wherein he decides that their motivation is inherently linked to a sexual

frustration they impose upon themselves in the name of so-called feminism and sensitivity. Points for that. "Emo" as in "sensitivity" has nothing to do with getting gotten on, which is unfortunate being that the wild deed is the whole theme of musical subversion in the latter half of the twentieth century (i.e., rock n' roll). Otherwise, he slags on LINCOLN as being an emo band amidst several others that I would otherwise tend to agree with. LINCOLN though... is there a pretentious bone in this band's body? Does it matter? I think one thing that needs straightening out in the whole emo witch-hunt (cute topic alert: "emo" is very flavor of the second in '95) is that what we would-be McCarthyists of thoughts, feelings and fucking spiritual beauty are really talking about, are the annoying kids we know in our dreary every day existences who traffic men and women's issues with the sincerity of kids who trade baseball cards and who play cop all too well, snitching on you to teacher at any given opportunity. Sometimes they sneak in a good band that doesn't contradict listlessness and the enforced boredom of gas station jacket zombiedom. So just be wary before you try talking shit at home. You might get it wrong and have the rain of good taste (as enforced by this one very thoughtful, pretentious scenester) raining down on your pretty little head. So to wrap this up, the one vague, enigmatic, poetic thing we can hold to LINCOLN is their lack of lyrics in the latter-day Art Monk releases following their distinctly hardcore Watermark debut. With song titles like "Benchwarmer" and "Waterboy" we can discern that feelings, light, gladness, and penis problems probably factor in there somewhere (frustrated Napoleon complexes set in the hazy spring afternoons of the football field, starring not too coincidentally, I imagine, the world famous anarchy cheer-leaders from the "Smells Like Teen Spirit" video, e.g., playing second fiddle to Judd Keene, the square jawed prom king in some John Hughes movie I never saw wherein Molly Ringwald doesn't pick the nerd lower-class proletarian/malcontent slated to her by the teen angst cliff-notes). But hey LINCOLN, they rock, which is more than I can say for those watered-down post-HOOVER

bands like INDIAN SUMMER. I still hold to the bands I've lambasted over the course of a few columns in this rag as being the true sinners in the world. Be in on your own joke, OK? This is all I ask. And like Mark Wilcox said, "If it doesn't rock, then I'm not sticking around for the ride." This is all that needs to be said.

2. Guilty pleasures. While we're on emo, I figure this segues nicely into the section where I amaze you with my predictable and tedious attempts to define the rock which totally rocks, and the noise that totally clocks. All right. BOB TILTON, put out a 7" awhile ago, it sailed across the seas from the shores of England, gracing the turn tables of several exclusive scenesters in Goleta and several parts of Jersey, became the cool hip slang-word for outlying fashion cliques, tatooed on their ever so sensual eyelids, and slowly, meanderingly made it's way to yours truly on the one tape that I had to listen to while "on holiday" (exile) in Connecticut for three weeks. It's definitely like a MOSS ICON with a little kick in the butt (which, I realize covers everything from my utterly evangelical grandmother to the fucking apocalypse). It's just that they've got their dynamics down, and deserve props. Again, I can't really look you in the eye and tell you that there's anything humorous or life-affirming to be derived from this that was in any way intentional on the part of the band, but the part where a break suddenly turns, literally, into an impromptu poetry reading really kind of won me over in a funny kind of way. Am I sap or what? Ding, ding, ding. Here we go again for the third time. It's the Return Of The Jedi of the blatant CREEPERS promotion trilogy. Check out the CREEPERS. This band is everything, literally everything to me. Granted, they are a Twin Cities thing, hence all of the kids throughout the nation are not able to clue themselves into utter redemption, drop their pants and get stupid, etc. Suspend disbelief and go for total worship. The only reason that we can say "punk is dead" is because punk is only a chapter in the legacy of rock n' roll, and rock n' roll but a volume in the legacy of lawless chaos. Punk has no monopoly on cool. It's a phase. You never can grow out of uncertainty, you can only

in fact, descend to the next level. This is where I'm at: total surrender to something that literally has made me realize that everything I ever loved or believed in was utterly tired, trite and inconsiderable. Kind of like how you all felt about Krishna Consciousness, you know? So with this in mind little Arjuna, give the CREEPERS a whirl when you get your chance and think about how you can better exemplify true rock n' roll all the while. Yeah, talk about dharma bums, punk. This is the real thing.

3. To some, this comparison is an old one, but I think it's worth talking about. The post-MRR family of zines is so much like TV it's mind numbing when you consider the implications. MRR is NBC, HeartattaCk is PBS, and Punk Planet is cable access. Is this fair? I think so. I have to say, in honesty, it wasn't until around issue four for this here zine that I was willing to consider that it was going to be anything other than a lamentable attempt at playing the big kids game for an inning or so. Perseverance and just existing seems to be the winning ticket. But if indeed we are post-MRR (as indeed we are post-NBC, ABC, CBS triumvirate, e.g., UPN, Fox, Warner Brothers), it can only be regarded as an opportunity for further expression in the areas of talking shit. Talking shit can only be an eye-opening endeavor in my eyes, since if kids are willing to critically evaluate the world around them, and talk about the music they're into, then I feel like they're actively engaged. Just by being in a "MRR" category you automatically cannot be pushing the envelope. So again, I implore my readership, why can't we start talking about how to make Sears & Roebuck catalogs work for us, and be not either substantive politically, or heinously stylish but ultimately substantively stylish? With this in mind, I found some unintentional humor put forth by the stumbling analysis of the brain scientists at Underdog magazine regarding the whole MRR clone phenomenon. We need more kids to read each other's zines and talk shit. Please understand that if I criticize any of the contenders for newspaper print stardom it is not out of some self-conceived obligation to do so. I do not get free copies of Punk Planet to sell to my friends if I concur, not too coincidentally, with the opinions of several people associated with this mag,

that Tim Yohannon is an old screaming woman who plays the part of an aging forty-year-old only all too well (just as an example). I had a Dad once, and I moved half of a country west to get away from him. Makes sense then that I could care less about the "good news" as offered in the January MRR that signing to major labels is indeed an ill ridden course of action that will land us all in jail, do not pass go, do not collect \$200. Major label interest has got to be regarded as a point of vulnerability which is an open invitation for these people to get severely fucked with. There can be no higher ambition than calculated revenge. Know your enemy. That's how I'd like to look at it.

How's that for an ending?

David Hake / P.O. Box 4061 / St. Paul, MN 55104 / dhake@macalstr.edu

**Julia
Cole**

I'm tired of preaching. I mean all I'm really doing is practicing my writing skills and exercising a little discipline while I spout off about something that's been bugging me—but then it looks like I think I've got a clue, doesn't it? So let someone else do the preaching this bi-month.

Words to Live By

The Revolution will not go better with Coke.

Tolerance of junk is one of life's most essential characteristics. In every sphere of life, whether cultural, economic, ecological, or cellular, the systems which survive best are those which are not too fine-tuned to carry a large load of junk.

The moon is a circum-ambulating aphrodisiac.

Frederick

Name of care

High above and sky to spare

He who [fornicates with]* nuns will later join the Church.

With the demise of imagination I inherited its residue, a kind of permanent disagreement with reality.

One must admit that even among intellectuals there are sometimes highly intelligent men.

Thinking's a dizzy business.

The Normal is the good smile in a child's eyes—all right. It is also the dead stare in a million adults. It both sustains and kills—like a God. It is the Ordinary made beautiful; it is also the Average made lethal. The Normal is the indispensable, murderous God of Health...

Waldo Jeffers had reached his limit...

That's SIR Derek Jacobi to you, bub

You mean they're still in a primitive state of neurotic irresponsibility?

I have a rosy sky, and a green flowery Eden in my brain...

Ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace. The mountains and hills shall break forth before into singing and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

If the sight of the blue skies fills you with joy, if a blade of grass springing up in the fields has power to move you, if the simple things of nature have a message that you understand, rejoice, for your soul is alive; and then aspire to learn that other truth, that the least of what you receive can be divided. To help, to continually help and share, that is the sum of all knowledge; that is the meaning of art.

Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...

Ah, love, let us be true to one another! for the world, which seems to lie before us like a land of dreams, So various, so beautiful, so new, Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light, Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain...

You have to be very strong because you'll start from zero over and over again

And as the smoke clears there's an all-consuming fire lying straight ahead.... When you pass through humble...when you pass through anger and self-deprecation and

have the strength to acknowledge it all....you find that that fire is passion and there's a door up ahead not a wall.

The means used to prepare the future become its cornerstone.

Come, my friends. 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world. Push off, and sitting well in order smite the sounding furrows; for my purpose holds to sail beyond the sunset, and the baths of all the western stars, until I die.

A promise is a direction: taken...

Work hard. Take chances. Be Very bold.

Illegitimi non carborundum

Whenas in silicon my Julia goes, then, then methinks how sweetly flows the liquefaction of her prose.

Oh Harold, everyone has the right to make an ass of himself.

These words have been brought to you by Gil Scott-Heron, Freeman Dyson, Christopher Fry, Patti Smith, The Clash, Stanislaw Lem, Mikhail Bulgakov, Dashiell Hammett, Peter Shaffer, The Velvet Underground, (I made this one up), "Barbarella," Charlotte Bronte, Isaiah, Eleanor Duse, Romans, Matthew Arnold, Lou Reed, Emma Goldman, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Ursula K. LeGuin, "Julia" (you know, the movie), General Joseph W. Stilwell, Robert Herrick (rudely violated), "Maude".

JuliaPrime@aol.com

*Sorry, but I want my mother to be able to read this!

**Darren
Cahr**

Today's subject is hatred. And love. The two being so thoroughly interconnected that any attempt to divide them is both futile and purposeless. Kind of like drinking liquid paper. Not that I don't enjoy drinking liquid paper, but only in moderation. Can't be too careful these days.

I've been thinking about these issues lately in two contexts: the personal and the political. My life, over the past four years,

has been an exercise in denial. Like everyone's. Like the river that shares its name. Because of that sizable stretch of lameness (and let me tell you, if lame were cement I'd be a twelve lane highway from here to Bangkok), someone very dear to me now despises me. Oh, she claims that it's behind us, that since we've moved on with our lives, that our past is irrelevant, that we're close friends, but the truth is that (deep inside) she would like nothing better than to see me impaled on a fork, dipped slowly into a steaming fondue pot filled with melted cheese, and consumed by a gap-toothed giant named Murray with a nasty case of halitosis and an overbite. She mistrusts me so much, that she assumed (and I'm not making this up) that I was lying to her about going to dinner at a California Pizza Kitchen because I told her that I went at 7:30 p.m. on a Wednesday. And every time we have a conversation of any length, she feels as though (like a necessary step of choreography in a years-long ballet) that she has to bring up my past errors, my mistakes — the moronic, unfeeling things that I heaped upon her shoulders, the things I did that caused her pain — so that I may not forget them, so I cannot start from scratch. As Faulkner once said, "Forget the past? Hell, it ain't even past."

The past is the chemical force that drives all hatred, it is the reason that forgiveness is, in the end, impossible. Your past is a chain that binds you to the present day, and nothing you do or say will erase the memory of those you have wronged, because your wrong made them what they are today. They cannot be seen or understood without seeing and understanding the fact that you fucked them over. If you hadn't fucked them over, they'd be an entirely different person. You changed them against their will. You took control of their future, and shaped it to your needs. They cannot forget that, no matter what they tell you, because no one can forget that feeling of violation. Remember when you pulled down the pants of little Bobby Fulton in fourth grade and he cried, and he was traumatized and went into therapy and decided that he could never live down the shame and he bought an AK-47 and went postal in a McDonalds?

That was your fault.

But getting fucked over, by itself, is not enough to hate someone. Hatred is something more than that — hatred is recognizing one of two things in someone else: a) That some element of that person is the antithesis of everything you are, everything you care about; or b) That some element of that person is exactly like some part of yourself that you despise. That identification is necessary, otherwise you'd hate every jerk you ever had the misfortune to run into, and no one has the time or energy for that.

Love cannot be seen in a different light, as it is almost the exact same thing. Love is recognizing one of two things in someone else: a) That some element of that person is exactly the same as you; or b) That some element of that person is exactly the antithesis of some part of yourself that you despise, and represents something that you have always wanted to be. The dichotomy is the same. And the power is the same. When you love someone, as when you hate someone, whenever they cross your mind they dominate it with a power that is nothing less than disturbing — you are no longer in control of your thoughts. When in love, or hating someone, you cannot get the object of your emotion out of your head. That's how you can tell real hatred and real love from the irritation and vague admiration that befits most people you might run across on a typical day: they run your life. Hatred and love is giving yourself over to someone else with something approaching masochism, sacrificing yourself at the alter of someone else's personality.

In the political sphere, hatred and love are more complicated — you don't feel it all the time, as you do in the personal context, but it can be just as strong. Bob Dornan is a Republican congressman from Orange Country in California. He is, undoubtedly, the most conservative member of Congress, and the most rabid political figure in either party since Strom Thurmond gave up segregation. He gave a speech a couple of days ago (and yes, I've dated when I wrote this, so sue me) in which he ranted, hysterically, on the floor of the House of Representatives about how Bill Clinton was a traitor who gave

aid and comfort to the enemy by protesting against the war in Vietnam. He hates Bill Clinton like few other people in the nation. When you watched him speak, he was clearly not engaged in posturing — he meant every word he said. The disgust he felt was plain on his face, a sort of loathing. He is playing for keeps.

Conversely, I hate Bob Dornan. He represents the worst in knee-jerk, unthinking politics, the hypocritical agenda of the religious right that proposes no government in the economic sphere, but intrusive government in the personal sphere. Unlike libertarian Republicans (whom I can respect) Bob Dornan is inconsistent, mean spirited, and driven by an unhealthy dislike for anything or anybody who doesn't completely agree with him. Of course, the question then becomes: what does this say about Bob Dornan, and what does this say about me?

What about Bob Dornan makes me hate him? To recap: hatred is recognizing one of two things in someone else: a) That some element of that person is the antithesis of everything you are, everything you care about; or b) That some element of that person is exactly like some part of yourself that you despise. Bob Dornan, to me, is someone who is the antithesis of everything I care about. Why does Bob Dornan hate Bill Clinton? Because some element of Bill Clinton (probably the part of Bill Clinton that we find the most irritating) is exactly like some part of Bob Dornan. Ah, politics.

But love is, in the end, more interesting to think about. Most notably, there's the question of when you can trust yourself when you think you may be in love. If you think you're in love, you are (statistically speaking) probably wrong, and you'll probably realize it (statistically speaking) within a few days. However, at some point, you'll be right. How will you know? What separates love from delusion? Maturity? \$20,000,000? A regular place to have sex?

Love is real when...I have no idea. I feel very strongly about this chiquita named Jill. She feels very strongly about me. She's been married before, and I had a live-in girlfriend for 3 years. Both of us were very, very wrong, and made serious errors because of it. What does that mean for us

now? Does it mean that we should nervously think about the errors of our past? Should we try to desperately figure out what it is exactly that we have? Should I analyze this to death?

Fuck it. I'm enjoying myself, and I've decided that I don't care what I call it, I don't care what it means. I'm happy (rare enough for someone terminally annoyed at the world) and I'm not going to waste my time complaining. Excuse me now, but I'm going to go have some fun.

Kerosene@aol.com

Daniel Sinker

As I start this column, I'm sitting on the bottom bunk in a youth hostel in Glasgow, Scotland. The light is off and I'm huddled over a notebook clutching a pen in one hand and a small flashlight in the other. Australians are snoring on all sides of me, and if I even move an inch in this bed, I'll shine light in the face of a particularly hairy Aussie who has the ability to wake up for absolutely no reason, and who then insists on walking around the room in nothing but blue jockey shorts & smoking in the bathroom; the light doesn't stray, I don't want to wake him up.

I don't normally write like this—not in bunk beds in strange countries surrounded by smelly people or with pen & paper; I'm a real slave to the computer when it comes to writing. I hardly EVER write the way I'm writing now. I actually like this. The immediacy of it. The wonderful scratching sounds the pen makes on paper in a room that is completely still.

Now granted, this gets a little abstracted by the fact that you're reading this long after the fact. It's no longer written on paper. It's no longer tactile or tangible. These words have passed through countless hands to get to you. So much for immediacy. So much for the violent scribbling of pen on paper.

"But enough about pens & paper & the time it takes from conception to delivery," you're saying, "what the fuck are you

doing in Glasgow, and who are all these Australians????!!"

The Australians? That's the easy part. It would appear that Aussie youths are able to spend a good deal of their lives wandering around the globe. It's strange, I know, but it's true. Every hostel I've stayed at has been full of Australian travellers halfway through their three year trek around the world.

As to why I'm here, I wish I could tell you. A calling? I need to go somewhere? I'm not sure.

I'm in Glasgow only briefly actually, I'm traveling around Britain for a few weeks in the beginning of January ("but wait, it's March!!" you declare—it's like this you see, abstraction, abstraction, abstraction), looking at ruined castles, cemeteries, buying every book in sight written by some washed up punk or another (I Was A Teenage Sex Pistol by Glen Matlock, The Jam: Our Story by Bruce Foxton & Rick Buckler), & getting rained on. It's been wonderful.

Sure, wandering around a gray country in the rain may not sound like the worlds most wonderful vacation, but England suits me fine. Melancholy colors & melancholy weather does a lot to calm the soul. Not to mention that almost anything is a lift in spirits compared to the claustrophobic, manic, & exhausting existence that usually surrounds me in Chicago.

As Vincent Vega remarked to his homeboy Jules in Pulp Fiction—which, if you think it was over-hyped here in the US, you should see the level of Tarentino fever England is in; each character in the movie has their own poster, including Bruce Willis, which caused more than a little pain in my heart when I had to pass it by (now boys, lets all admit we've had more than our share of painful adolescent crushes on Mr. Willis)—in Europe (and yes, England is a part of Europe), it's the little differences that make the place so foreign to us Americans. And it's true.

I've really been overwhelmed by how old everything is here. Being from America—especially from Chicago where nothing is older than just before the turn of the century due to the fire—I have a warped sense of age & history. Britain is filled with history & age. Good lord, I have walked over graves that have been around for 900 years!! It's really fascinating.

Taking a trip like this one, one where you are completely responsible for yourself and your actions, really helps you put other things in perspective. Sitting in my room in Chicago, pumping out Punk Planet layouts & going to school or work really is no way to order your mind. Instead of looking at things for what they are, I have managed to let myself be completely overwhelmed by trivia, like what label Rancid is signed to on any given day. Traveling—completely removing yourself from your normal surroundings & routines—forces you to think about what's important to you and what is just meaningless bullshit. I hope that I return from this trip renewed & ready to start over again.

...

Well, as I type all that in, I'm a little embarrassed by my naiveté. I'm back in Chicago now. I have been for a few days (I've managed to unpack to the degree that all the crap I brought with me is no longer in the backpack, but instead spread out all over my floor), and have now realized that no matter how clear my thoughts may have been while I was bent over double balancing a pen, paper, & a flashlight in a Glasgow bunk, as soon as my foot crossed the threshold of my apartment, they went right back into their previous state. Complete immersion in chaos and confusion. Being away for three weeks from an entity like Punk Planet means that a mammoth game of catch up needs to be played in order to get up to speed on what is happening. If you're reading this then obviously there is an issue to be read, which means that I won (or at least did well enough in) the game. But at this point, the visiting team is kicking a whole lot of butt. And the kicks hurt. A lot.

To add to the pressures of being back at home, I have started school again, which is a whole 'nother well of emotions & feelings that need to be called up. Fuck. I've been back for about five days and already feel like I need a vacation. It's a vicious circle. The more time you take off, the more you need. Pretty soon I'll be globetrotting with the best of 'em. Wait up, Larry!

Since I've returned to being obsessed with trivia (a trait I swore I would try to change in England) I may as well do a full Dan Sinker Rancid Update™, which seems to have become a normal occurrence in my

column. This is the last time. I swear (hope). Anyway, for those of you that still don't know (and I'd like to thank my column in the last issue for aiding in the dissemination of misinformation): Rancid made a last second decision to stick with Epitaph. A good decision but, at least in my eyes, one that should have been a non-issue from the start. This Epic bullshit has left a bad taste in the proverbial punk rock mouth.

However, what Rancid does or doesn't do is pretty much unimportant since the record of the year has already been released, and unfortunately the prize has to go to a major label. For any of you that are diehard Pogues fans, as I am, you will be glad to know that the Shane MacGowan solo album is out under the moniker "Shane and the Popes". To say simply that this record (er... CD) kicks is to utter a MAJOR understatement (pun very much intended). This album finds everyone's favorite huggable drunk Shane MacGowan a little more sober and rocking out ways that most punk rockers can only dream of.

Not to mention the fact that this whole major label issue is really beginning to stink like yesterday's tofu. Major's are only killing punk to the degree that the 'scene' has become so polarized that no one can talk about anything else. We are our own downfall. So stop writing about how that preppie kid in your social studies class is wearing a Green Day T-shirt now; and start writing about real issues and real thoughts. That kid'll disappear in a few years (or perhaps will become yer best friend). Let it go. *Let's Go!*

...

In Chicago news, the local braindead hipsters & self-centered anarchists (not to be confused, of course with the good hipsters & anarchists—you know who you are) are busy celebrating the closing down of Wicker Park's only real bookstore. They've been working very hard over the past year & a half or so to make every day life a living hell for the one bookstore in Wicker Park where you can actually get NEW books. And they've finally succeeded in making it tuck its tail between its legs and leave.

Now, why target a bookstore, you ask? Good question. Apparently somewhere along the line, some kid got it in their head that only bourgeois, evil, yuppies know how to read and that a bookstore opening up in the community was obviously a horrible thing that bred gentrification. Now, one could perhaps glean that idea from some bookstores that only cater to a certain clientele, but this bookstore bent over backwards to cater to the 'native' arts & Hispanic communities that are already here. Simply a quick look at their magazine rack would show anyone that they were definitely not a yuppie-only franchise (unless, of course, all the yuppies you know read *Girl Jock* & *Film Threat*).

But, of course there was no point in actually taking a look at what the place had to offer, or even trying to start a dialogue with the owners. The much more logical approach was to start an all-out attack at the store. One that not only included printing up some SERIOUS lies in the local hipster magazine, but also putting glue in locks (who us? They ask with such sweet faces), spray painting slogans & being pretty much goons.

Now oddly enough, stores that catered to the white folk of Wicker Park continued to open up even after the bookstore did. Some of them got bricks in their windows or their signs splattered with paint. Others, however, were allowed to exist peacefully. What were those stores? Record stores, art galleries, bars; just the kind of place that the hipsters & anarchists like to go to. So then those stores aren't the enemy. Only the ones with those evil yuppie things. You know, like books.

So the bookstore's gone. There's no where to go to buy new books, except for the horrible Crown Books about a mile & a half away. Once again, victory is won in name of the proletariat. Viva la revolucion!

...

I have been waking up before noon on Saturdays recently. Why? Cartoons! When I was a kid, I used wake up at 6:30 in the morning & start watching cartoons. Unfortunately, at 6:30 on a Saturday, there was little more than religious programming on any station. But promptly at 7:00, the station would be taken over by the

liberator of kids everywhere: the Saturday Morning Cartoon. It was wonderful.

As I grew older, the cartoons became less exciting, less funny. I'd like to say that's because of the fact that they became more and more about selling products, instead of entertainment, but I attribute most of it to the fact that I just out grew them. There were skateboards to be ridden & dungeons and dragons to play. I eventually out grew those things too.

Sleep became my major form of entertainment on Saturdays. Until I was forced to outgrow that and go out and find a job. Since then, I've worked more jobs than I would like to think of that have dragged me out of bed at extremely early hours on Saturday mornings. Actually, now that I think about it, I probably wasn't waking up any earlier than I did when I was a kid.

For the past few years, I've been blessed with not having to work on the weekends & have fallen back into the routine of sleeping through most of it. But no longer. Now I have a reason to wake up. It's called *Bump in the Night*, and it could possibly be one of the most inventive, visually exciting, hilariously funny 1/2 hours I've ever spent in front of the TV.

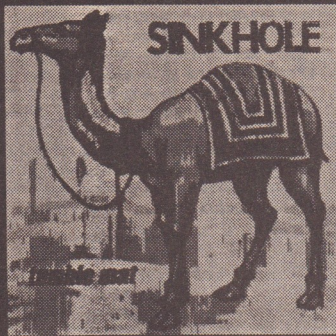
...

In late breaking news. Anyone seen the Courtney Love issue of SPIN magazine? I sat cross-legged in the bookstore reading it the other day (once again, I'm writing this in er... February now; you're reading it in March—at best). One of the more entertaining segments (most of it is simply her—once again—talking about her headless husband), is where she explains that Mary Lou Lord is one of the five people on this earth that she would like to kill. Way to go Mary Lou!!

...

Thanks for reading this far (if you have) extra special thanks goes out to everyone that has mailed in postcards to me. Keep 'em coming! Mail 'em (and any other correspondences) to: Dan Sinker PO Box 1559 Chicago, IL 60690. Email to: TastySpydr@aol.com

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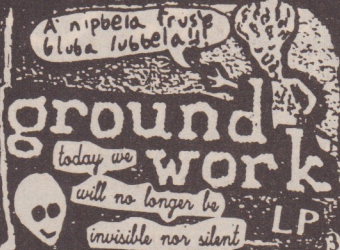
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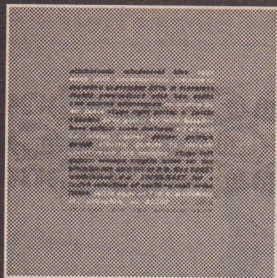
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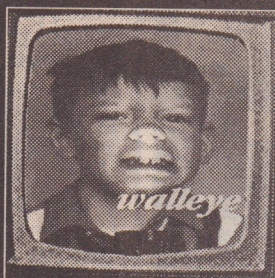
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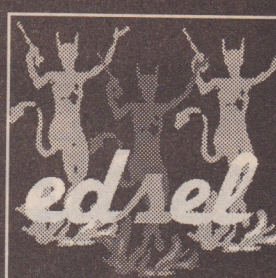
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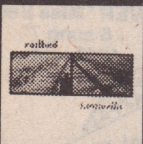
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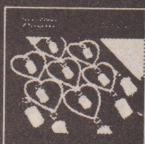
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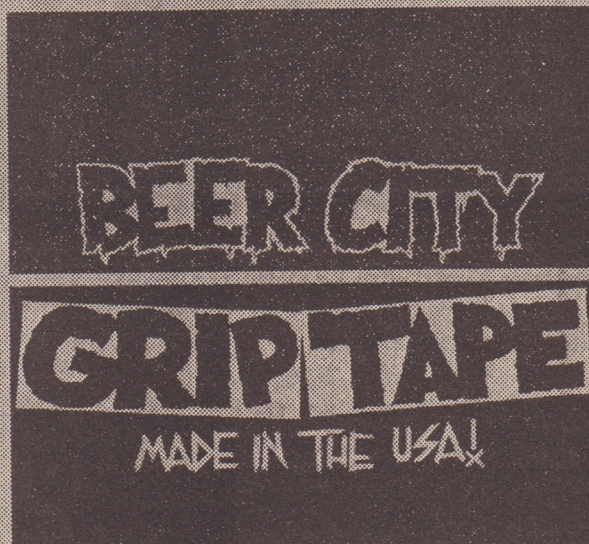
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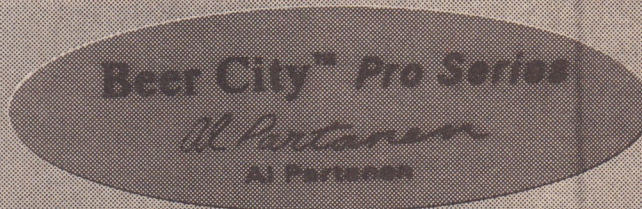
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CAPITALIST CASUALTIES



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Punk Planet: First off, what do you do in Capitalist?

Jeff: I play bass and I sing half the time.

PP: How would you classify Capitalist Casualties? What kind of punk?

J: Hardcore punk, basically.

PP: You wouldn't say grindcore?

J: No, not at all. Our drummer is really into grindcore, but we're totally influenced by early punk though.

PP: What bands? It seems a bit faster than early punk in my mind!

J: See, we're distinguishing between punk and hardcore and I don't really think there's a difference. Since we're labeling everything this will be early hardcore such as early D.R.I., early M.D.C., early Japanese hardcore bands and stuff like that.

PP: What's the scene like where you are in Santa Rosa?

J: It's pretty cool. We're not really involved in the scene here too much because hardcore or punk or whatever you want to call it, is not really the thing to be here. There's a few emo bands around, and a couple pop punk bands and they all play at the local coffee house and stuff. It's pretty cool. I've been to a few of the shows. I mean, we've been a band for seven years so we've seen scenes come and go here. This is like

the new breed of kids. That's what it's like currently. It's never really been big for hardcore bands.

PP: I heard it was really segregated out there, with the bands and types of music.

J: Oh, fuck, it's segregated everywhere. I'd say it's about the same here as it would be everywhere else. They totally hang out with their own little cliques most of the time. There's not enough shows with a lot of diversity in them. Like we would never play with a band like Fifteen or a band like that just because the people wouldn't think of booking it. Years ago we played shows with a wide variety of bands, style wise. Currently that's what the scene seems to be like.

PP: This is a stranger question; not strange in it's mannerism, it's just strange in the question. I play in a band, and when I listen to you guys I have to wonder if you write the songs as fast as you play them, or do you start off slower and then build up until they're really fast?

J: That's a really good question. Actually, when we're learning the songs, we play them slower. Slow to us is pretty darn fast, but we just wanna get the feel of the riff and the song, so we do play them a little slower and as we keep going Matt decides what tempo to play the song at.



PP: Neat, I'm sure he'll be pleased to hear that. Moving on... I've heard that you guys are really big in Japan and have a whole bunch of releases there. Are you planning on touring there soon?

J: Definitely. We're hoping to make it there this year. We're getting our contacts together. We're doing a split ep on MCR company in May or do an H:G Fact also, and determined with that them have offered some over there, so hopefully released a live ep there on with this really cool guy

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PP: Just like in Suburbia?

J: Oh fully, the heart of suburbia.

PP: No, no, the movie!

J: (laughter) I guess it is, huh? But we didn't live in a cool run down government housing project. And none of us had any dogs. Anyway, they were like taking snapshots of us and showing them to the police. We'd have twelve packs out on the curb or something like that. Finally... do you want the whole story?

PP: I want the whole story.

J: Finally, this is the crescendo, it all came down, we were chased out of the creek by the police for drinking. The creek was a good fifty yards from my house so we could make a sprint for it. When we showed up one of my friends realized that he lost his skateboard, left it where we were drinking because he jammed because the panic was too much. He got really mad and started screaming, going "God damn it I lost my skateboard... rar rar rar!" All of a sudden, at the gate across the street there were these two redneck guys hanging out, one of them lived across the street at one of the families house. These two rednecks come chasing us going "shut up!" so me and my friends started running towards my garage door, slightly cracked open and dive underneath it, close it and lock it. Then they started kicking my garage door going, "you bastards we're gonna rip the hair outta your head!" Finally they just gave up and me and my friends went and sat on my porch and all of a sudden three cop cars came screeching up to my door and we're all like, "fuck what the hell?" And they were all "put your hands behind you back" and all this shit. And we're all "Fuck, what'd we do?" and they were all, "we have reports that you were kicking in garage doors down the street." Then there were the three rednecks sitting on the corner, drinking, smiling at us and laughing. We got arrested and taken down and our parents had to come bail us out. When we got home, Matt, the drummer in Capitalist, and our friend Kelly were stationed down the street and

playing that fast and instantly were in line with each other.

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PP: That's bizarre.

J: And Massachusetts is coming up on the list too. We're doing a split EP with a band there called Ulcer.

PP: I was told that you guys used to live in some place called Ronherst park and that there used to be neighbors who chased you around and stuff. What's the deal with that?

J: Ya know, being young punk rock kids and all that I lived in a cul-de-sac and we'd get home from drinking in the creeks (being underage and all we couldn't drink in our homes and stuff) and we'd end up skateboarding in my little cul-de-sac with the radio blaring our favorite UK peace punk band at the

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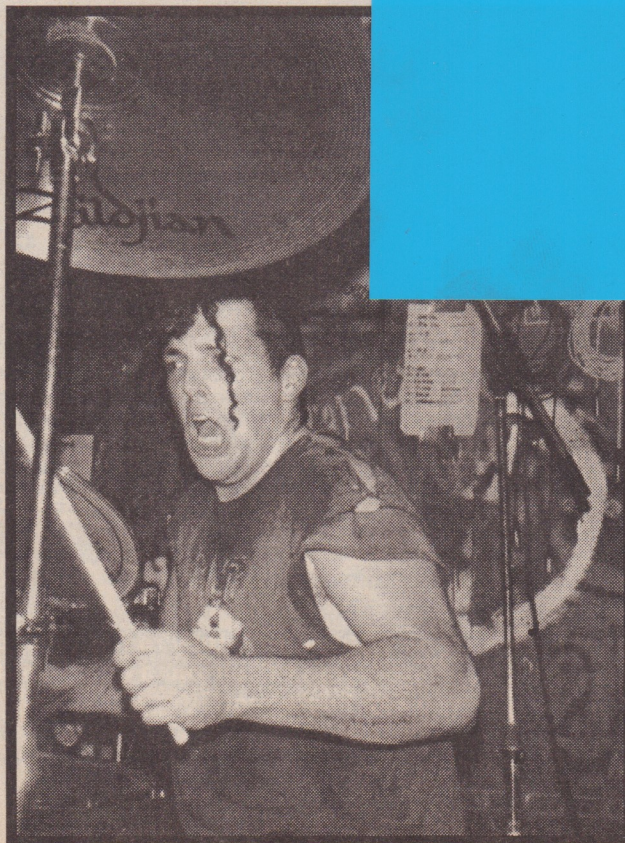
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company in May or June. We wanna do an H:G Fact also, but nothing's been determined with that yet. But both of them have offered some help in getting us over there, so hopefully we will. We've released a live ep there on vibrator records with this really cool guy there, Shinji.

PP: Yeah, I've got that with the big fold-out poster and all.

J: Yeah, he did an *excellent* job on that. We're just totally thrilled to death with it. We get a lot of mail from over there actually. There and Germany and New Jersey are the places we get all our mail from.

PP: New Jersey?

J: Yes.

PP: That's bizarre.

J: And Massachusetts is coming up on the list too. We're doing a split EP with a band there called Ulcer.

PP: I was told that you guys used to live in some place called Ronherth park and that there used to be neighbors who chased you around and stuff. What's the deal with that?

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PP: You mean how fast you can play it?

J: Well, we can play as fast as we wanna play!

PP: Oh ho ho, is that a challenge?

J: How's that for bragging? Matt's just a really good drummer and he can play really fast. Some songs don't sound good going as fast as Matt can go. Some songs do and are supposed to be played that fast. Usually, to tell you the honest to God truth, the tempo is really decided when we record the song. Because then we'll hear it like a hundred times and then we'll know that's how fast to play it. At least that's how it is for me.

PP: It just seemed really tight, and I couldn't imagine you guys started off playing that fast and instantly were in line with each other.

J: Well, our sense of tempo is set by us mouthing how fast we want it. "Matt go tat-tat-tat-tat-tat-tat-tat" or "Matt go du-tat-du-tat-du-tat-du-tat." Usually he's just like, "Well, how fast do you want it?" so we've got to tell him mid-tempo or hella fast.

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I was just walking home going "fuck, that sucks" and all of a sudden I hear this (whisper) "Jeff, Jeff!" I walked around over to where they were at and they all had these molotov cocktails and they're all "We're gonna torch the fucker's house!" And I'm all "No, no, don't do that they're gonna come right back for me," because the cop said that if anything happened they'd be right back at my door. I was all "dude don't do that, that's stupid, I'm gonna go to jail" and they're all "no dude, they can't do that to us!" It was gonna be like Beirut and shit. Eventually all the neighbors moved because they couldn't take us, so we won in the long run. That's the whole story. They didn't like us practicing in my garage either. They couldn't take that. It kinda reverberated around the cul-de-sac. There's your suburban punk rock story for the evening.

PP: It's a pretty good one at that. Sorta makes me wish I did that, except I don't skate.

J: Oh, that's cool. I don't skate any more either.

PP: There you go.

J: Two years after that incident it was Halloween and I was drunk and I was skateboarding and I came up to an intersection and my skateboard didn't stop, but I did. The skateboard went into the middle of the street and was slowly rolling through traffic, the cars missed it but the last one just snapped the board and the was the last skateboard I ever had. You're getting all the good juicy stories.

PP: I try. Speaking of which, I heard that you guys used to have a bad rep for playing shows and starting trouble that was completely unwarranted.

J: Totally. We just got a bad rep because we don't take lightly to people whining about where they are on the bill. Like there was this local band from Santa Rosa and there was this night at Gilman Street of all Santa Rosa bands and they whined about having to open the show and the person who set up the show was like a friend of theirs or something and caved in so we had to open up the show. So they had their poster up behind us so I went up there with a pen and crossed it out. I guess that's where the

bad rep came from. We didn't start trouble, we were just pissed off at some locals. We didn't want to fuck up the show. We're not out there beating people in the pit or nothing. I mean, (nerdy voice) *I wear glasses for Christ's sakes I don't even go near the pit!* That was our one instance. Plus everyone around here thinks we're a bunch of heroin junkies. We were described as that to a friend of ours. They're all "Oh, Capitalist Casualties? Those death-metal heroin junkies?" So, I don't know where that shit started from.

PP: That's a handy reputation to have.

J: Yeah, now and then we'll get a letter and on the return address I'll write "death-metal heroin junkies."

PP: Neat. So, on to other things like Six Weeks Records.

J: Oh? What do you want to know? This I actually enjoy talking about!

PP: Oh, what's that supposed to mean?

J: Just kidding. Actually you're like the best person who's ever interviewed us at all, so that's cool.

PP: Hey! I should tell colleges that.

J: Tell 'em Jeff from Capitalist said so!

PP: Now I've gotta come up with a decent Six Weeks Records question.

J: Wanna know anything about it? I run it with my girlfriend Athena...

PP: I've got one. Tell me about it!

J: All right. It started as a zine by me and Athena who's in the Dread, she plays bass and it was basically just a detail of our tour that summer. Then we decided, "hey let's do a split 7!" "Well what'll we call the label?" "We'll call it six weeks." Named six weeks because, obviously, that's how long the tour

was, so there you go. Basically we did it because when we went around the states we saw all these little scenes, these little pockets in South Dakota and Flagstaff, Arizona where these kids were just amazing! They set up shows and they had so much energy and helped out all the bands and really were into everyone's local band, and it was kinda different from how it is here where everyone is in their little cliques and just concerned with that. It was kinda inspiring. Since me and Athena have different tastes in punk basically we said, "hey let's do it because we can support the bands we wanna support and make sure they get heard and stuff." So, that's what we've done and we've released three ep's an LP and two issues of the zine.

PP: Well, I'm plum out of questions. Would you like to leave your address or anything neat like that.

J: It's 2262 Knolls Hill Circle; Santa Rosa, CA 95405 for Capitalist and Six Weeks.





Fakir Musafar

Before navel rings became the teenage rebellion of choice, there was Fakir. The first time I saw Fakir was in the book, Modern Primitives. Here was a guy who could hang himself from trees with hooks piercing his chest! The only words to describe it? "This was

Fakir". Now Read. Interview and photo by Dave Tate. Illustrations by Dan Sinker

PP: You are... How old are you?

Fakir: Sixty-four

PP: Sixty four? You're almost as old as my grandfather!

Fakir: Yes, I am a grandfather type, but it doesn't really look like it because all of the people that I hang out with are between twenty and thirty years old (laughs).

PP: Then how does a man your age—what are you... When were you born?

Fakir: 1930.

PP: 1930. So where did all of this start. With you. Do you know what I'm saying?

Fakir: With me?

PP: Yeah. I mean where in the middle of the conservative '40s and '50s...

Fakir: It was even worse. I was in a very isolated part of the country. This happened in eastern-northeastern South Dakota, which was a virtual desert at that time. Prairie, farms, and farmland. I grew up in a very small town there. actually it was the third largest city in the state, but it was still a pretty small town. It was a new town made up of sons and daughters of sod-busters, basically. People who'd homesteaded. I grew up among merchants' children and the children of ex-farmers. I also grew up with a large number of American Indian children because this town was located on the edge of the sis-Sioux Indian Reservation. Since it was such a loose tribal organization, they [native americans] made a neat arrangement with this little city to have their children attend our schools, all the way to the high school level. So I made very good friends with the Indian children. From the very onset, I was an outcast. What I liked in life and what I felt was valuable, was of little value whatever,

and didn't [the public] even know that it was existent to the rest of the folk. They had totally different values than I did. So I was kind of like a loner, an outcast, and I kind of tended to form alliances with the other outcasts like the Native Americans that I went to school with.

PP: So this introduced you to some of the rituals?

Fakir: Yes, at a very early age.

PP: How early?

Fakir: I heard Indian elders speak with great silence and great awe about their sundance and about the passing of the pipe, the sacred pipe, and a lot of things that... and their view of what the body was. Another very unique thing that I learned at a very early age had a totally different view that I was being impressed upon as a son of a sod-buster type, where I was made to go to—let's say—a Lutheran church and a Lutheran catacism and there was their great god over here some place; the time-share god, there's one for everybody. I never bought that. It just didn't feel right to me, and I found that in the Native American culture I came in touch with... They talk of Great White Spirit. They weren't talking about one Great White Spirit for everyone, but that everyone had a Great White Spirit, and the main thing was that everybody get in touch with their own Great White Spirit. When you did, you did it by sweatlodges and all that sort of thing.

PP: So you were accepted. Were you ever given any... Let's say a "place" in a tribe? Like an honorary member?

Fakir: Well... To a certain degree. You have to remember that growing up in the 1930's, it was the government's policy of assimilation [US policy of absorbing minority groups of different races, religions, etc. especially by inter-marriage], which had been in place since the 1920's. So, tribal events were discouraged. Some were even outlawed. The sundance was outlawed. The people in our area, the Sisans and the Tankins, were allowed to have pow-wows. I mean, it was a big thing for the local town-fold to get a watermelon in July, then go out and go the pow-wows. They had their best ones up around the fourth of July. We had one very special Indian holy place up by where I lived called Cichy Hollow, and it was just an amazing look at the 'barbarians' or something [sarcasm]. To the people from the towns that dominated the area, it was a circus, but I took it very differently. When I got there and heard the beating of the drums, and I heard the chants, and I saw what went on for two or three days, I connected with that. I connected with the drums and the chants and not with the people who had brought me out there to eat watermelon and to laugh at the Indians.

PP: To you, it wasn't like an event, but something spiritual?

Fakir: It was to me. They [Indians] were reaching deeper into the soul. The culture and the people that I grew up with, felt to me, to be very superficial. They were not interested in anything deeper. A very shallow view of life.

PP: So what do you get out of what you've done with your life? What kept you going for forty years?

Fakir: Well, for thirty years I was doing all kind of things in secret. I felt that there was more to life than what was around me and that these people lived and knew, and I could not share any of these desires with them. When I did, I got rebuked and rebuffed.

PP: So you were ostracized at the time...

Fakir: Yeah, ostracized highly for showing an interest in doing anything out of what had been prescribed...

PP: By the white man or the Indians?

Fakir: The white man. The Native Americans were his dogs. They were sub-human people. It was impressed on me again and again throughout the years. It's only recently now that they've opened sweat lodges around Aberdeen. It's great now. If I went back now, I'm sure that I would fall in with them, and I'm sure that I would end up sitting in the sweats.

PP: So you've been doing this for quite some time. I read somewhere that you've been actually body piercing others for twenty years.

Fakir: Well, I've been piercing others for at least 20 years. I started piercing myself in 1942. I did my first permanent body piercing when I was 12 years old. I was being quiet and all that. I was an avid reader. I spent my time in libraries searching for other peoples, other ways, and other sets of values that I liked, I wanted to go try it. So I would read about people in Africa, people in India, people in other parts of the world like the South Pacific. I would then go secretly and do what they did. If they tattooed themselves, I found out how to tattoo myself. If they pierced their body, I pierced my body. If they laid on a bed of nails, I would lay on a bed of nails.

PP: What would one get out of lying on a bed of nails? What was your motivation other than reading about it?

Fakir: The bed of nails is a very neat device that allows you to focus on a sensation inside of your body. What I'm primarily interested in is finding three or four cultures that embraced this business of being able to access to deeper parts of reality through the body. I tried Zen meditation and a lot of methods of non-physical means I hadn't had very good luck with that, and many other people that I had contacted hadn't had very good luck with it either. I have found cultures that were using the body, and using the things like piercing—very extreme physical rites in one way or another—to open doors to other worlds, to unseen places that we like to go...

PP: and pleasures...

Fakir: And pleasures, ecstasy, and it's all tied in with sexual energy, eroticism, and the whole thing. It's all tied in together. Not accepted in this culture. Very much not accepted.

PP: But something that you have no problem in carrying on?

Fakir: No, and I had to be secret because if I had let any of what I was doing be known, especially back then, they would have put you in an insane asylum and never let you out, and I knew that (laughs).

PP: So where do you see all of this going now? There's a huge, huge wave of this coming now.

Fakir: Well, the world has opened up. We're in a revolution. We're in the final stages of a big revolution. I saw this revolution, for me, it stated in the 1960's. The first time people experimented; Tim Leary, the people at Harvard found, extracted, and took LSD and said, "Gee, the world that we see may not be the way that we really think it is". that was the beginning of what I considered the biggest cultural revolution since they discovered fire maybe (laughs).

PP: Do you use drugs to enhance your rituals?

Fakir: I never did. For my own personal exploration, I did not want to do it. I wanted to find traditional methods that I could control and to find my way into altered states in this way. Now, after I have learned to do this, and do it quite well and very easily, I've learned to walk away from my body and to look at myself and so forth, and to go to other spaces. In my

later life, I felt that it was OK for me to try this and see what would happen. Oddly enough, I found that I would go to the same places that I went when I would hang from a cottonwood tree by flesh hooks. But other people that took, let's say LSD, did not get to those spaces. So I figured that all that any of these things were, were ways to open the door. Where you go after you go through the door takes preparation, takes guidance, takes wisdom. It takes ancestors and tradition, it takes ritual that is very very right. If you have that, no matter if you take acid or if you hang in a tree by fleshhooks, you are going



to go. You are going to be projected by a higher degree, a being, a higher self. It will be where you need to go.

PP: So there is a sense of magic involved, a sense of internal magic.

Fakir: Yeah. I internalize. Now I'm on a different track at this moment. I'm trying to get into my body more. To me, through all these years of experience and lucid daydreaming and so on.. Self hypnosis was very easy for me when I was ten years old. Now I have to learn to go back the other way, and be in my body a little bit more. It's too easy for me to leave my body. I space out real easy.

PP: With this mass influx of people... Even if piercing becomes even more commercialized; you see all of these teeny boppers wanting their navels pierced and so forth. Is that healthy to your ideas as to the exposure?

Fakir: I think that it's healthy. It's an opening up. Any one of those kids would've been put in an insane asylum 30 years ago.

PP: So you see no problem?

Fakir: No. It is walking on the edge though. Whenever you start going into a deeper side of things, it's waling on the edge. I'm particularly fond right now of going on my own feelings and desires and being with, for instance, Tamil Hindus. They've been doing all of this hype for four or five thousand years. They gave us Yoga. They gave us Tontra and a whole lot of stuff which is now just beginning to be appreciated.

PP: You're also a contortionist, right?

Fakir: Yeah. It's a part of doing Yoga. It's a body play...

PP: And anyone can do that?

Fakir: Sure. Anybody can do any of these things. If you have a body, you can use it. It can be your living canvas to mark on. Your living clay to sculpt. It can be your door to unseen worlds. You can do all of this through the body better than any way I know of. Quicker, easier, and with more control.

PP: That's interesting because as I look through some of these pictures, I don't see how any normal human could do that...

Fakir: Well... you're seeing what's on the outside. Recently, Theater—Journal wrote an article, and some academic went into great length to explain what my theater was. He asked for pictures and I said "well, I never considered what I do as theater, I consider this ritual." Then he explained what he had

meant by theater and I thought, that by the way he was looking at it, I could see where he was mistaken. The drama that's taking place, is a drama that you don't see. What you see are bodies in the drama. The drama is taking place in the feeling and in the head of the performer, the person that you see. When you look at these pictures of me doing things, you're looking—and you have to use an intrusive sense to see the drama. Some people can see it, some people can't.

PP: So, where do you see all of this going? Where does this end?

Fakir: Where does this revolution end? There's a long last desperate gasp here on the part those people that do not like the liberation of the soul—we usually refer to them as the conservative right or the religious right—the extremists of anything. The extremist Muslims. I've had a lot of problems with them. It can be the Hindus. They all focus on the want to pressure themselves. and it's all based on the oppression of human rights, liberty, and freedom. Like when you get into religious orders, like in this western culture, you know, there are churches and priests. There's this whole hierarchy built on controlling people. "You can't talk to God except through me" type of mentality. I don't need priests, I don't need temples, I don't need your holy book.

PP: Is there anything else that you would like to comment on?

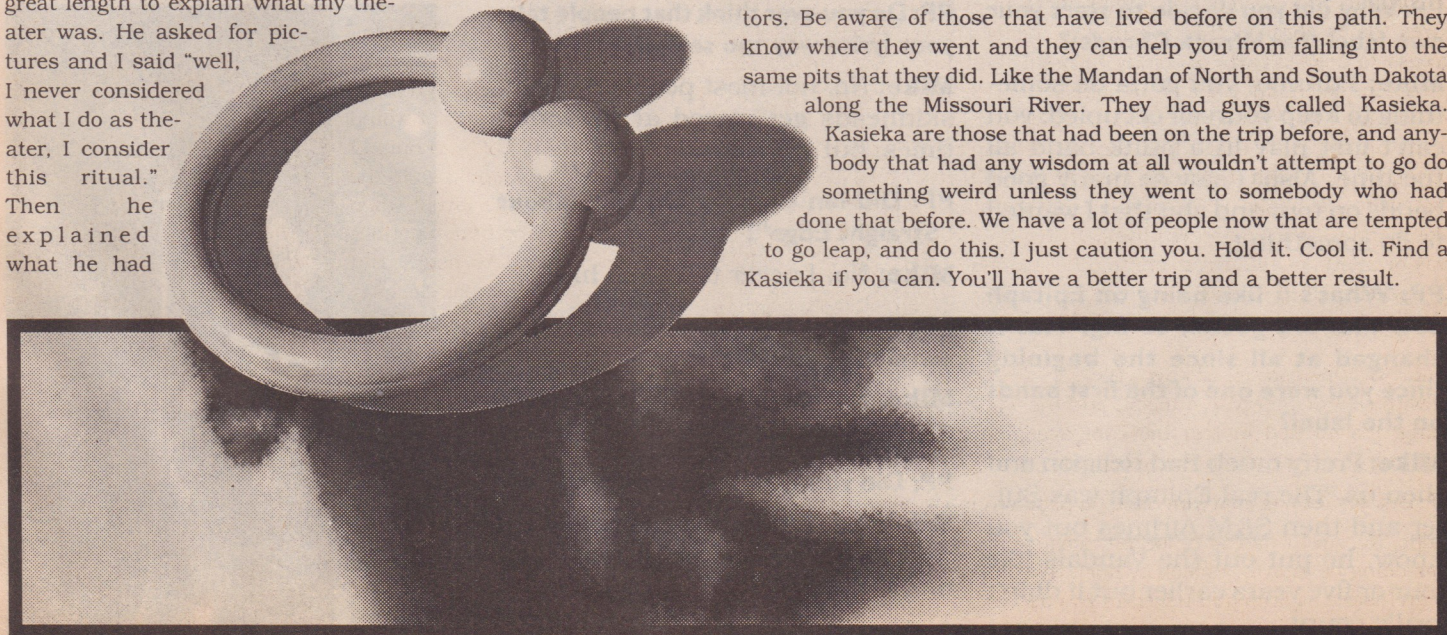
Fakir: Where is it all going? In spite of all the resistance and in spite of all the last ditch efforts to hang and burn all of the witches again, so to speak. There's just too much feeling, too much advancement, too much uprising, too much freedom that's been felt. Now, there's no way to bottle it up again.

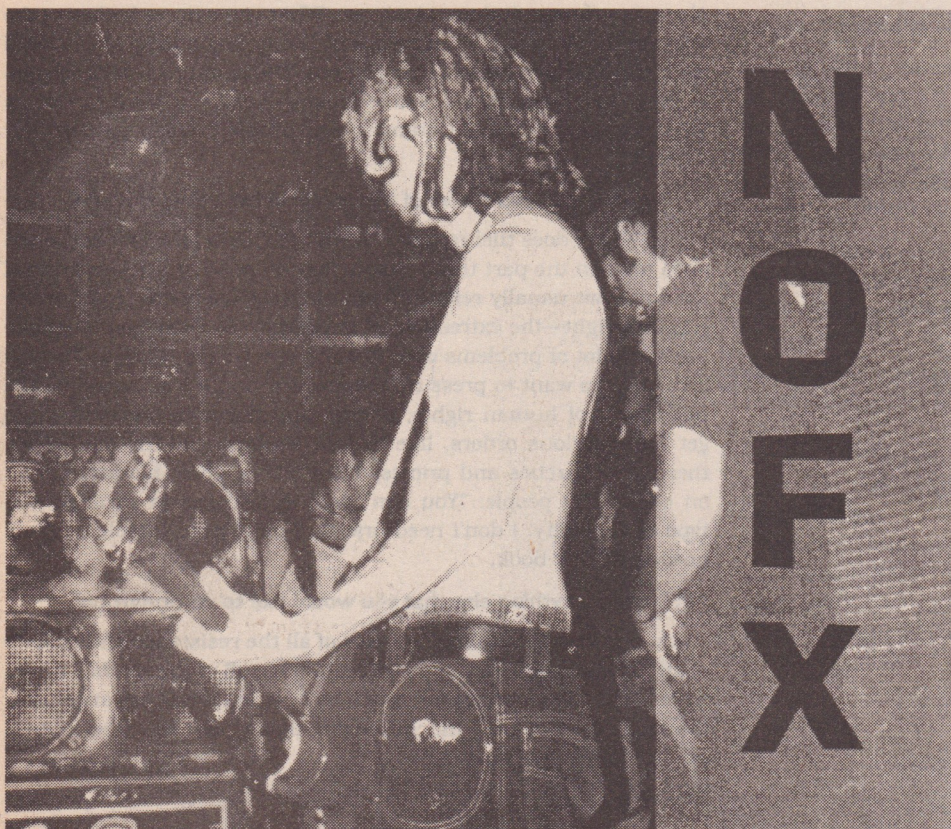
PP: It's too late.

Fakir: I think that you're living in a wonderful time. I'm 64, and you are what, 24?

PP: 27

Fakir: 27. So you have a hell of a lot of nice years to live through. Some will be difficult because these guys are going to come around with machine-guns and shoot at you. For the most part however, you're going to enjoy a liberty, a freedom, and an ability to express yourself. My only waring is to everyone who's going to have that freedom that I never had: Be wise, and listen. Be aware of your ancestors. Be aware of those that have lived before on this path. They know where they went and they can help you from falling into the same pits that they did. Like the Mandan of North and South Dakota along the Missouri River. They had guys called Kasioka. Kasioka are those that had been on the trip before, and anybody that had any wisdom at all wouldn't attempt to go do something weird unless they went to somebody who had done that before. We have a lot of people now that are tempted to go leap, and do this. I just caution you. Hold it. Cool it. Find a Kasioka if you can. You'll have a better trip and a better result.





by Hunter Hillegas & Jeff Theimer

★ When NOFX came to Santa Barbara CA,
I was determined to interview them.
This is an interview with Fat Mike (bass, vocals).

PP: Why did you decide to start your own label (Fat Wreck Chords)?

Mike: I dunno, you gotta do something to keep yourself occupied, you can't just play in a punk band all the time. Also, I saw so many good bands on tour and shit that I wanted to do something.

PP: What's it like being on Epitaph now that it's gotten so big? Has it changed at all since the beginning since you were one of the first bands on the label?

Mike: Pretty much Bad Religion and then us. The real Epitaph was Suffer and then S&M Airlines but you know, he put out the Vandals like four or five years earlier but it didn't really count.

PP: Do you ever think that people take your lyrics way too seriously?

Mike: No, not most people. I mean, skinheads get pissed at us sometimes, but who cares.

PP: Did Ian ever say anything about "Straight Edge"?

Mike: No, I never talked to him.

PP: You guys have a few videos. Is that something you like to do?

Mike: No, we hate it. We have made a few. "Leave It Alone."

PP: Did you guys send that to MTV?

Mike: No. I'm not saying that we'll never do that but we're really not into it now.

PP: The home video you just put out on Fat, Ten Years of Fuckin' Up, what was it like putting that together?

Mike: I think it's good. I put it together, me and my friend Alex. I spent a lot of time putting it together. It's just real, ya know? It's got some really cool footage of playing for a long time. If people think we're assholes now, like rock stars and all that shit, you look at the video, you see a lot of fucking shit happen over the years. It's not just us playing big sold out clubs. Sometimes in front of nobody.

PP: It seems like you've become really popular recently.

Mike: Yeah, more. I'd say that we're about as popular as Bad Religion was about a year ago.

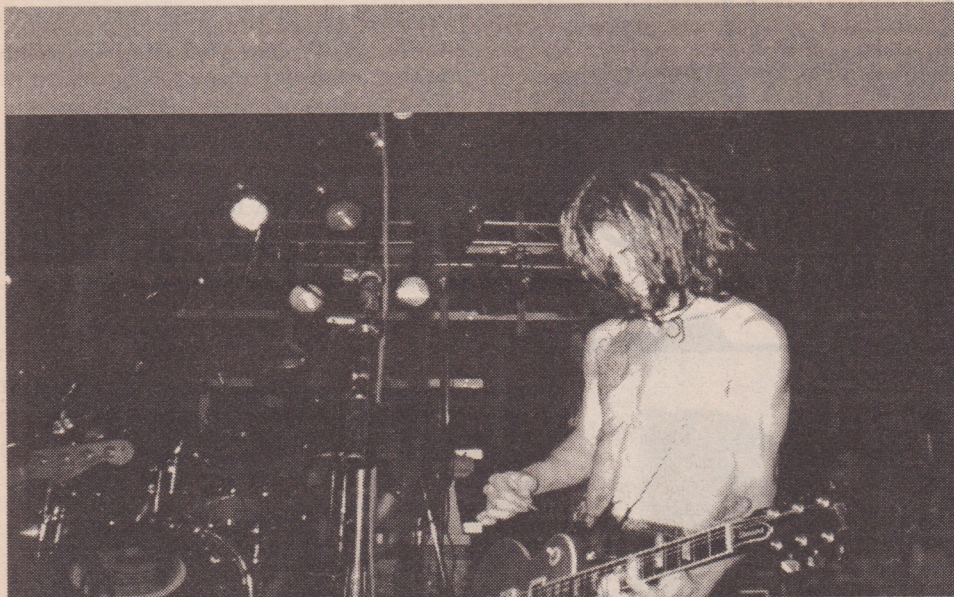
PP: What kind of really shitty day jobs have you had?

Mike: Me? Not many, I went to college. I went to SF State. The last job I had I was delivering drugs for a pharmacy in high school.

PP: What have you been listening to in the van on this tour?

Mike: Today we were just checking out Jay's new stereo. Fluf. Bracket.





Bracket's like my favorite band. The new No Use For A Name album. The new one that's not out yet. It's really good.

PP: How have things been going on this tour so far?

Mike: This isn't really a tour. This is just 3 days.

PP: How about your last tour with Face To Face and Ten Foot Pole?

Mike: That was great. It's the best tour we have ever had probably. It's the first time the US was as good as Europe. We'd been getting like a

thousand people a night. Really good crowds. It was really good. The last time we toured the US it kinda sucked. Guttermouth is going to be doing a European tour with us in two weeks.

PP: What's the wierdest place you've had to sleep on tour?

Mike: The wierdest place? I know exactly. It was in Japan, at this apartment complex and this guy told us it was cool to sleep there. We fit like twelve of us. Apartments are really small out there. On a hard wood floor, no furniture. This one apartment where all the walls were

kicked in. There was all this graffiti. It was like 3 in the morning. We just wanted to go to sleep. We all had sleeping bags, sleeping on the hard wood floor. The guy said, "Oh, this is the Aukusa." Ya know, the Japanese mafia. And he said that no one could sleep there. No one could rent it and no one could stay there. Then they told us, if someone comes here in the middle of the night, just run because those guys are fucking nuts. Yeah so, that wasn't too cool. It was pretty lame.

PP: What do you do when someone calls you a sellout?

Mike: We don't hear it too much. No, we don't really hear it too much. I just say whatever.

PP: Does it bother you that people getting into punk rock now are more the jocks and social types instead of the people that really care about the music?

Mike: Well, I went to an Offspring show the other day, and it was pretty lame. But our shows aren't like that. It's sad but I'm a lot happier that I can turn on the radio and listen to it during the day. And hear some cool music. Instead of shitty music you have like, 2/3's shitty and 1/3 pretty good music. Which is totally rad. It's great. Nirvana changed the music industry. Gave it a big kick in the ass and now there's tons of great bands, so I think it's great that some of these bands are big now and people hear it all the time.

PP: Okay, we're pretty much done. Could you give us a complete NOFX discography?

Mike: We don't have that many records out. Just Punk In Drublic, White Trash, Ribbed, The Longest Line, S&M Airlines, and Liberal Animation and then the PMRC 7", the Liza and Louise 7", the two Mystic 7"s. That's about it. We had one S&M Airlines 7" in Germany.



Mary Lou Lord

Mary Lou Lord pushes the boundaries of punk in directions they are rarely pushed. With her airy voice and minimalist acoustic guitar playing, she sets the entire idea of punk on its ear. It's melodic, it's catchy, it's... folk? So what is it, exactly, you ask? Read on my friend, read on..

Interview by Will Dandy, from questions by Dan Sinker. Mary Lou photos from Kill Rock Stars, other photos by Dan

Punk Planet: When and why did you start busking?

Mary Lou Lord: I started in 1987 because I was going to school, to college, in London, and I lived in a squat and we didn't have any heat so it really sucked to go home and so everyday after school I used to go down into the tube station and watch this one guy play and then one day the one guy said, "Can you watch my stuff while I go to the bathroom?" so when he went to the bathroom I picked up the guitar and I played my little threechord progression that Shirley from Berkeley, the music school I used to go to, taught me and when I was playing that three chord song someone threw a coin in. So I was like, "oh man, shit" so the next day my parents wired me some money and I bought a shitty guitar and everyday after school instead of watching that one guy I'd play my threechord wonder over and over and over at the station, so I didn't have to go home to the freezing squat. So, I learned a song, and then I learned another song, so then I had three songs and then more. I finished school, and then I came back to Boston and I was going to the subway one day when I was looking for a job and I said, "well maybe I'll just try this once," and I never stopped doing it, and that's why I became a busker.

PP: What do you usually take home from busking, money-wise? Do you make a good deal of money or barely scraping by or what?

MLL: I make about \$35 an hour and I usually play for hours. That's my average, \$35, some nights it's more. I played on New Year's eve and I made about \$250 in about two hours. It's good, it's real good.

PP: Do you do it mainly for the money, or do you enjoy it too?

MLL: I really enjoy it. I totally enjoy it. In fact when I don't do it, like when I lived out in Olympia, I was out there for like eight months or something and I was just miserable. It's just not the same as a gig because at a gig you're all nervous or all tweaked out and then you get on

the stage and you just don't have enough time to get over that tweaky feeling. When you play in the streets you're nervous for about five or ten minutes and then you can just groove with it because you're playing for about six hours. It gets you warmed up, then you just groove with it, it's just great.

PP: So you'd rather play on the streets than at shows?

MLL: Totally.



PP: That's cool, is busking your only job or do you do anything else?

MLL: Yep, it's my only job, when I lived in Olympia I worked at the [someplace I can't understand] cafe, pouring expresso because they didn't have a subway and stuff.

PP: Do you have a regular place to live now or do you still squat some-time or what?

MLL: I live with my parents because instead of paying rent, the money that I make I usually just buy plane tickets with and then I can go around and see my friends in other parts of the country.

PP: Where do you fly to?

MLL: I go to Seattle, New York, sometimes because I'd rather just fly to New York because I can just go down for the day. Then LA, Albuquerque, where-ever. England...

PP: In any of those places do you play for money too or is it just something that you do in Boston?

MLL: Yeah, sometimes when I'm in San Francisco I play there. I definitely play for money, to buy the plane ticket to come home! That might take me a week or two weeks, as opposed to just a couple days in the subway. Sometimes I buy roundtrips for a nice place to go and have money for other stuff.

PP: In other cities I know there are laws making it illegal to perform on the street. Are there laws like that in Boston?

MLL: Well, yeah. It's mostly zoning like you can't play in certain parks, in Boston common, or on certain divisions of streets, but when I play in the street in Boston I play in the street in Cambridge mostly and Harvard Square. It's totally thriving right now. It's one of the only places

in the country where it's actually legal besides maybe San Francisco or Berkeley. It's \$25 a year for the permit which is good, but there's so many other fucking people out there playing. I use a little amp when I play and these people have full on Bose P.A. systems that they're generating off car batteries. Some M.I.T. dude figured out this totally suped up system using a car battery and now they're all using that shit and I can't really compete with those guys. It kinda sucks, the competition is outta hand. It's pretty legal in Boston. In L.A. I played on the Santa Monica Promenade, but they kicked me out because I was using my amp. Then at Seattle at the market you can't use your amp. It's weird, some places you can't do it at all, others you can't use your amp, stuff like that.

and say some creep walks up and hasn't heard me yet and the creep will be like, "oh baby..." you know kinda in my face, wanting to pick me up, stuff like that. Sometimes they wanna like touch you and stuff like that, but I'll just start playing and not even acknowledge their pestering presence and their attitude shifts and instead of like "oh baby, baby" they're more like "don't fuck with her." They get really brotherly. I think my voice sorta soothes them and puts them in their place and turns them into a kid or something like that, or like a brother. My voice is very unthreatening so get to where they wanna protect me. So it shifts. As long as I'm playing I'm all right.

PP: I know when I was in Boston over the summer my friend and I played on the streets for two days in Harvard Square, we didn't make as much money as you do though, and one time some guy came by and sat by us and started like

PP: Do you ever run into any creeps when you're playing or have any problems?

girls who walked by and acting like he was smooth and stuff. I didn't know if that was a regular occurrence or not.

MLL: Was he fucked up?

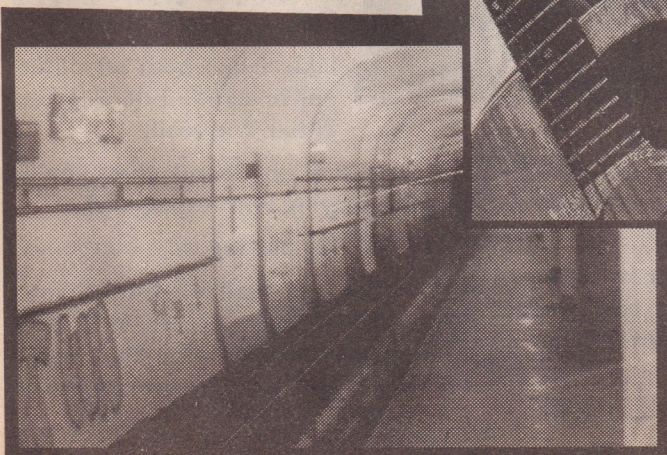
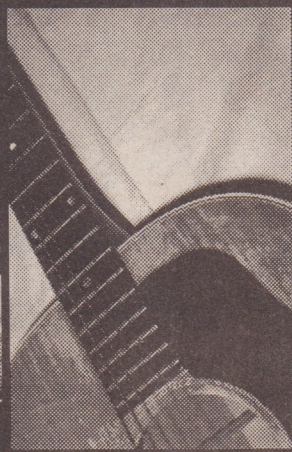
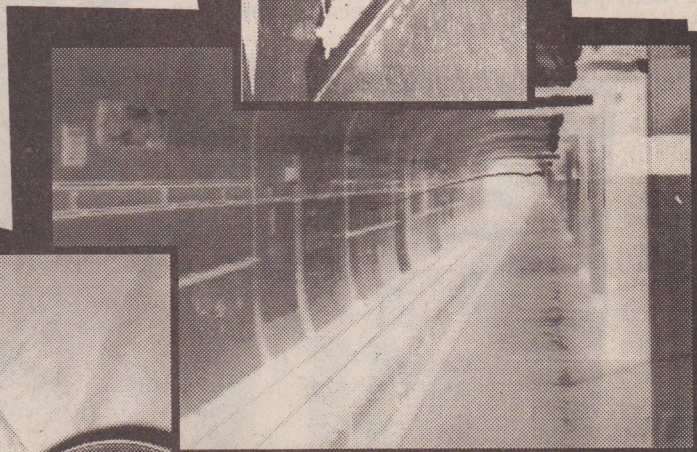
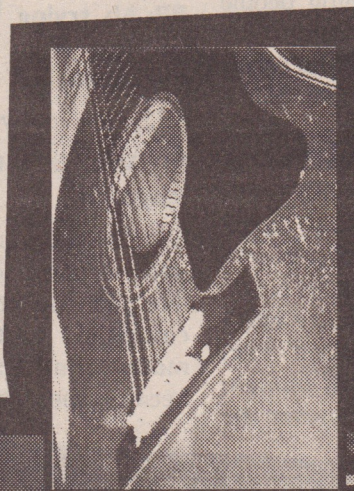
PP: I'm not sure. It was during the day. He didn't really look it. We just tried to ignore him as best we could.

MLL: There's a lot of fucked up people in Harvard Square. I mean, a lot of weird shit has happened, but just not weird enough for me to be effected by it. Not harmful, just weird, but you

MLL: No.

PP: That's pretty cool.

MLL: Well, sometimes I'll be like tuning my guitar or something



can always walk away from that shit too, so it's ok.

PP: Do you consider yourself to be playing folk music or punk music?

MLL: Some one asked me what my definition of folk was. I think that the two of them can be similar. My definition of folk is anything that carries a political message. A lot of times in the old days folk music was about communication. It was the only way they could communicate without big brother picking up on what the fuck they were talking about. Traveling people would deliver the news through the songs. You'd think they'd be the entertainer, but they were actually telling you what the fuck was going on in the next town, or watch out for this, or watch out for that. So, I think that's what folk is. The songs that I play aren't really political in that they're mostly love songs or little gossipy songs about shit that makes me crazy and I don't think that I can call it folk, because it's not really political enough. It's more like of my own whatever the fuck I care about.

It's my own shit, but not really important enough to have to really tell anybody about. So it's not really folk music. Punk music to me, a lot of it can be related to folk because it can also have some sort of a political, deeper message, with a culture of its own and not so many rules and shit like that. So, it's close. As far as your

question, I don't know what I am, but I definitely don't think I'm folk because I don't really have a message. But as far as punk, I guess the only thing that it would have to do with that is that I've been pretty D.I.Y. for a long time and there haven't been any rules at all in my playing, or in the way I've performed, or the way I've lived my life. I'm completely independent, and I think that that's very punk and stuff like

that. Does that make sense?

PP: Yeah. Have you done any records besides what you have out on Kill Rock Stars?

MLL: No. Well, I actually have, but it sucks.

PP: Ah, trying to hide it in the closet, eh?

MLL: You know it.

PP: Was it a full length?

MLL: It's 14 songs, and it came out like shit. A lot of covers and stuff. I made that tape because these guys

asked me to do it and I just did it. I did it at a time when I was completely fucked up outta my mind and it just sucks.

PP: I'll take your word for it. Is there any truth to the rumor that you're hooking up with Lint from Rancid to do a record?

MLL: Yeah, it should happen. Right now I know that those guys are

swamped with people telling them to go this way, and go that way, and do this and do that. I think there's a lot of opinions running around in their lives. I don't know, I won't get into that, but yeah there is truth to that and I just hope that

Lint has enough time to do it.

PP: Would it be acoustic stuff?

MLL: I think it would probably just be an electric guitar and him singing.

PP: Do you prefer playing alone or with a band?

MLL: I like both for different reasons. I don't prefer either one really.

PP: Is there any band that you've enjoyed playing with especially?

MLL: No I like playing with everybody.

PP: Hey, I just realized something... Didn't I see your picture in Rolling Stone awhile back? Was that weird for you? Did you get any reaction from that?



MLL: Well, my cousin called me and some people in the subway said "Why are you still down here?" and I just gave them a very curious look back and then I played, "How does it feel to be on your own like a complete unknown when you're in Rolling Stone." (laughter) That's how I answered them.

Kill Rock Stars and hanging out with punk rock kids. Dealing with them individually it's funny because there's been talk about me signing with

majors and stuff like that, and a lot of

the kids would never say to me "sellout sellout" because I can do whatever the fuck I want. I

don't give a shit. I've paid my dues. I've been playing in the subway and the streets for seven fucking years, and playing eight hours a day for five days a week. I can do whatever the fuck I want. It's funny, because I would of thought that they might be like, "Oh you're thinking

about going to so and so..." but individually they'll come up to me and be like, "did you decide on who you're going to sign with yet?" and

they're all happy for me and they're like, "you just go get 'em Mary Lou." I feel like one of the kids, the blue collar kids, who got accepted to college. Yeah, the big evil, but they're

psyched for me. I don't know what that means anymore to be indie or punk or major. It's just how you live your life and how you treat your friends and what you believe in. Shit like that. I don't know. maybe I'm lame, but I've worked really hard and I've been honest with myself, and that's what the music should be, and I guess that's what you should never forget is who never fucked you along the way, and the people who treated you well along the way.

PP: So, have you signed to a major label now?

MLL: No. I think I'm gonna stay with Kill Rock Stars. Every label starts somewhere and I love Kill Rock Stars.

PP: Do you want to leave any parting words then or an address, because I'm out of questions.

MLL: Kill Rock Stars; 126 NE State St #418; Olympia, WA 98501. In the internet there's a place where I can get email. I don't know the guys name or anything, but his name is "promote" he's in the IPU folder or something. There's a south by southwest convention thing, it's like this kinda ridiculous convention of bands and stuff that are gonna play there. It's like March 15-18. It's in Austin Texas and I'm gonna be playing in the street if anyone is around Austin at that time. Also, I'm gonna be doing a tour at the beginning of Elliot Smith from Heatmeiser, he's doing a solo thing. I guess I'll close with that.



PP: That's pretty smooth.

MLL: Always thinking.

PP: Well, how does it feel?

MLL: We never knew how it felt. We never knew. We could just imagine. No... It didn't feel like anything! It was pretty cool.

PP: Did you get any flack for it from punk rockers?

MLL: It's funny being on a label like



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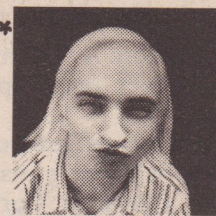
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I hate London. No I don't, not really. It just never lives up to your expectations.

Everybody comes here from all over the UK. They're never satisfied with Yorkshire or Derry or Cornwall or Glasgow. It's always going to be brighter here, more noise and excitement, more faces and bodies and life.

England itself is dull, there's no denying that. In a way, that's its main attraction for me. It's also safe, and, in a perverse sort of way, comfortable. Stumbling down the Great Western Road, choking on diesel fumes, cursing the clanking, grinding roar of millions of unoled gears, I still ask myself what I'm doing here, why this place is even here? It should have fallen to the barbarians centuries ago. Actually I think it might have, I don't know, I was never very good in history.

I've got to hurry if I'm going to make it to the off-licence before it closes. If I weren't such a tightwad, I could have stopped at the pub and downed two or three pints in the time it's taking me to walk over to the Harrow Road. But I'll save at least two, maybe three pounds this way. And not have to listen to the clanging bells and the barman shoos everyone out at the top of his lungs.

The roar of the motorway always makes me edgy as I cross under it. I hate the motorway. It gives me great joy when I look out my window and see traffic at a standstill. I love to picture the faces of the motorists, livid with frustration and mouthing silent curses at their fate. The only thing that could make me happier would be to see the whole monstrosity tumble down into the canal and disappear forever.

Now the canal, that's something I appreciate. Before they had motorways or tubes or trains or even stagecoaches, there were canals that went all around England. This one - I've heard it called the Regents Canal, the Grand Union, and the Grand Western; nobody ever seems to know anything for sure around here - was one of the first. Barges carrying goods and people could float down from the midlands and north right into the heart of London. Today the canal is mostly a festering sewer where a few



desperate old men fish, but it still feels remarkably alive and real compared to what surrounds it.

As I cross the bridge over the canal, I'm forced, as always, to think of her. Her being Lily, the girl of my dreams, inasmuch as I'm allowed to have dreams anymore. I swear, if it weren't for her I'd move somewhere else, anywhere else, maybe completely out of London. Brighton, that would be nice, to live by the sea and still be within an hour's train ride of the city. On the other hand, if it weren't for her I might not want to move. I might be perfectly happy in this ideal little bit of London that suited me so well when I first found it.

If only I hadn't decided to buy those shoes, if only the winter hadn't been so

cold and damp and my American sneakers so full of holes. Californian by birth, I hadn't come prepared for the fierceness of an English winter. By mid-December I had reluctantly concluded that a new pair of shoes was in order, despite the dismal state of my finances.

I wandered up and down the Portobello Road, looking in shop windows until I spied the pair I wanted. Unfortunately, in practically the same glance I spied Lily, wearing one of those long, flowered dresses that was too elegant by half for a girl of her position. She was a shop assistant in a wished-it-was-trendy place called Office. I was later to learn that the shoes I had chosen, a pair of Dr. Martens steel-toed oxfords, were themselves very trendy, a fact that caused me much misery when English people would tease me for having typically American tastes.

They seemed to sense that nothing annoyed me more than to call me American. I might have been born there, and lived there most of my life, but I was English now, or at least determined to become so. Thanks to an accident of birth - my father had been a Londoner who spent a few years in the States - I had every right to be here, and I had no intention of ever going back to America.

What's more, since my father had disappeared when I was quite young and never contributed to my support in any way, I had decided that England itself should repay his debt. I therefore made a point of signing on for the dole as soon as I arrived, and am pleased to report that I have not yet put in a single day of gainful employment.

It's not exactly a luxurious existence, even with the few hundred dollars in savings that I brought with me from the States. Housing benefit covers my rent, but if I want to eat more than potatoes or drink more than water, I have to do a little stealing. Luckily shoplifting is easier here than in California. The English are a more trusting people, though I imagine they'll eventually get over it, thanks to the likes of me.

But I was telling you about Lily. The fact that I was even able to learn her name stemmed from a miscalculation on her part. She assumed I was a

normal customer when I came in to look at the shoes I had picked out. If she had known that to me they represented an entire week's dole money, or that I had deliberately chosen not to walk a few hundred yards down the market and buy the same pair for four or five pounds less, she might have thought me a little odd.

If she had known the elaborate fantasies I was already harboring about her, she would have thought me truly odd, and perhaps never have allowed me through the front door. As it was, she must have figured I was a typical layabout, the sort that throng to Ladbroke Grove and Notting Hill, possessed by aspirations far beyond their means. We tolerate a good deal of pretense amongst each other, and I say "we" because I had little doubt that she too was one of us.

Oh, there was enough of that rough-hewn working class patina about her to give her a degree of street credibility, but it didn't obscure the wistful, dilettantish aspect of the artist-in-waiting that hangs in the wake of nearly every sharp-eyed, diffident hipster who hasn't yet crossed the threshold of 50 or even, perhaps, 60. Why people still come here years, decades, actually, after its heyday, is a mystery to me.

There's Islington, or Camden, or a half dozen obscure and cheap spots south of the river, where the real artists and trendmakers gather; there's little here but good vegetarian food and a colorful residue.

Why, you ask then, am I here? I find it restful. It reminds me a bit of Berkeley, where I grew up in the bleary aftermath of the hippies. Heaven, the Talking Heads once sang, is a place where nothing ever happens, and heaven was a rollicking, roistering knees-up compared with this place.

As usual, I'm alone in my opinion. I can't even mention to someone that I live in Ladbroke Grove without their eyes visibly widening, if not rolling about in their sockets, and I can predict their next words with near certainty: some variation on, "My, we're certainly in the thick of things, aren't we."

Not so often spoken, but nearly always assumed is that I must be either a drug dealer or living on some sort of trust fund. At one time the dole was a perfectly respectable occupation around here, but with rents and other costs having gone up the way they have, most people regard the dole as merely a starting point, something to be re-invested in dope or to be used as pocket change for cigarettes and beer.

Everyone's got a dodge and I have none, other than the knack of looking innocent, and I seem to be rapidly losing that one. Shopkeepers have taken to giving me the jaundiced eye when I set foot upon their premises. Which brings me back to how remarkable it was that I somehow managed to cajole Lily into taking me at face value, i.e., considerably more than might have been wise on her part. After she'd sold me the

less you like billiards, is its well-preserved brown-pub decor, complete with fireplace that burns with a welcome flame on most winter nights. But any tranquility it might appear to offer has been shattered by the installation - at the behest of the mafia, no doubt - of a multi-screen video jukebox that plays rock and heavy metal music at deafening volumes and shows endlessly repeating tapes of racing cars and motorcycles.

I can't stand the atmosphere myself, and why I took Lily there was as much a mystery to me as it must have been to her. She was clearly uncomfortable, and starting making her excuses before she was halfway through her first pint. "Let's go somewhere else, then," I half-shouted over the music.

"No, no, I really have to be getting home," she said, not that I expected her to say anything else.

"Then let me walk with you."

She looked dubious, especially when I suggested that we walk along the canal towpath instead of the streets. It was far, far out of the way, and not a particularly romantic or even safe setting for an evening stroll.

Nonetheless she consented, mostly, I suspected, because no one had ever asked her to walk

along the canal before. She was almost as new to London as I was, from some town whose name I can't recall but which was somewhere near Manchester. Of course she was only working in the shop for the time being until she got established as, what was it, a dress designer, a fashion illustrator? I don't remember, one of those things that pretty girls from the north come to the city to become.

Perhaps the beer had gone to her head or I had caught her in an unguarded moment, but it was soon clear that she was nearly as alone in London as I was. Oh, she knew many people to talk about, while most of the characters in my conversation were either imaginary or elaborations on someone who had sat next to me on the bus, but I could tell she was not close to anyone. Lived by herself in a



shoes and wondered aloud at the origins of my accent - "You're not Scottish or Irish, are you? No, wait, I know, it's Canadian, isn't it?" - she unwittingly agreed to accompany me for a drink when she'd gotten off work.

She automatically started in the direction of Finch's, which I could have predicted with my eyes closed, but I was having none of that imported lager-swilling yuppie pretension, and steered her instead to the Elgin, an absolutely tatty and tacky dive in Ladbroke Grove which attracts the sort of crowd that wouldn't fit in anywhere else.

It was once quite a scene - apparently the hash dealers used to operate freely at its tables, even allowing customers to roll up spliffs and sample them right there - but London has changed, not, in most cases, for the better. The only charm remaining at the Elgin, un-

bedsit, I guessed, but didn't ask for fear that she would think I was trying to cadge an invitation.

I had far more serious intentions. Before we had even reached the canal I had decided I was going to marry her, and now my mind was largely concerned with where we would live, how many children we ought to have, whether my estranged mother should be invited to the wedding. I didn't repeat any of this to Lily, assuming that, like most girls, she would rather pretend that momentous events like love and marriage unfolded naturally over a long period of time.

But there was not a doubt in my mind of where this was leading, and when we were thrust into a moment of real darkness as we passed under the bridge where the Great Western Road crosses the canal, I threw my arm around her, pulled her toward me, and kissed her.

Rather impulsive, you might say, especially since she hadn't given me the slightest sign that she wanted me to do such a thing, but it always seemed to work in the movies. And for a minute or two, a very long minute or two, it worked here. She tensed up at first, but didn't actively resist, and even kissed me back for a moment.

It wasn't that pleasant, really. It was all too mechanical and premeditated on my part, and I felt nothing, or very little, except for the slightly unpleasant sensation of her very chapped and dry lips chafing against mine. It was almost as though the little bits of flaking skin were tiny knives or teeth on a grater. They felt as if they were slicing or tearing into my own lips, and though I tried to overcome the discomfort by reminding myself that I was kissing the most beautiful girl in the world - and my bride-to-be - I had to pull away from her.

I smiled - a knowing smile, I hoped - and tried to see through the darkness into her eyes. She shrugged, almost imperceptibly, and started walking again. The rest of the way to her flat, I busied myself suggesting places we might go on her next day off. She didn't respond to any of them, nor to my offer to meet her

after work the following day.

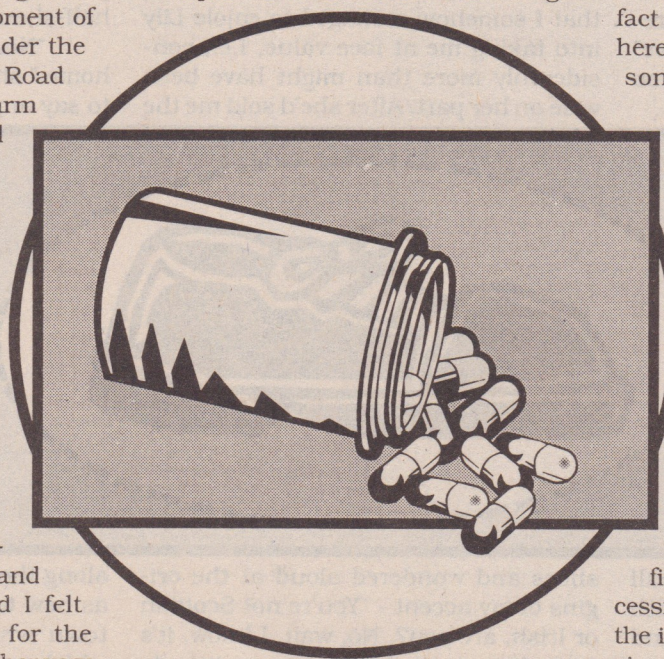
Nevertheless, I was there, complete with the excuse - albeit true - that since I came down to the Portobello Road every afternoon, I might as well walk her home again. She was noticeably disinterested in the prospect.

"I have to meet some friends," she lied.

"How long will you be, then? I can meet you after."

She demurred, with that distinctively English coolness that I both admire and loathe. "Oh, I don't know how long I'll be, it wouldn't make sense to plan on anything."

And so began the dance, a minuet of despair and destruction, as I might



more fairly characterize it. I never tired of dropping in to her shop, or catching up to her as she strolled down Portobello or Westbourne Park Road and she, without any overt hostility or unfriendliness, would unfailingly rebuff me.

Then one morning - what was it, a week, ten days later? - I woke to find that horrible thing on my lip. I guess the polite term for it is a cold sore; that's how the chemist referred to it when he sold me some Blisteze to put on it. But I knew that a more precise word was herpes, and I knew beyond a doubt where it had come from. I hadn't so much as kissed anyone but Lily since coming to England, and I'd never had any such thing afflict me before.

It was grotesque. I couldn't bear to look at, and yet I spent hours in front of the mirror studying it from every possible angle. Not only did it look hideous, it was extremely painful. Well, to be perfectly frank, I have a very low tolerance for pain. A minor headache is enough to send me running to the chemist for some codeine and aspirin tablets. I reasoned that since the sore on my lip hurt at least as much as a headache, and the psychological pain was far greater, I was certainly entitled to some codeine for this occasion, even if it did exceed my budget.

Sometimes in my lower moments, I would catch myself wondering if the fact that codeine is sold over the counter here in England wasn't one of the reasons I'd decided to live here. That sounds pretty extreme, I know, but when I was honest with myself, I had to admit I had consumed quite a lot of the stuff. There weren't that many days that I didn't find some reason to eat at least three or four tablets. I'd almost stopped going to one chemist - the smiling Indian in the Harrow Road - because the way he'd look at me with concern and ask if I was still ill began to fill me with irritation and self-loathing.

I had been making an effort to stay away from codeine when I first met Lily, and had been fairly successful. Once I became consumed with the idea of marrying her, my new obsession took the place of the drug, and I hadn't even thought about it for a few days. But circumstances had obviously taken a grave turn for the worse. A "grave" turn, I liked the sound of that. I kept repeating it to myself as, after downing six codeine tablets, I strolled resolutely through the cemetery that stretches along the north bank of the canal.

That day and for a few days after, I didn't make any effort to see Lily. I was too self-conscious about the way my lip looked to go out in public, so I stayed in and brooded, something I have a great deal of experience in. You might think I worked myself into a state of resentment toward her for inflicting this awful condition on me, but that wasn't quite how it was. Yes, I was annoyed, even a little

angry, but the more I thought about it, the more I saw it as a sign that she and I were connected by forces more powerful than either of our individual wills.

The fact that we now shared this virus - a virus the chemist had already told me was incurable and might cause recurring outbreaks the rest of my life - had to mean that we were now inextricably linked. Surely she couldn't in good conscience marry anyone else now. When I wasn't being depressed or frustrated with the sore on my lip that showed no signs of going away, I congratulated myself for being so noble and understanding as to not only forgive her for what she had done, but, despite it all, to still be willing to marry her. Surely she would be overwhelmed with gratitude when she realized that.

I was eating enormous amounts of codeine, I guess. I told myself that since I was suffering from a genuine ailment, there was no point in being hard on myself or attempting to ration my intake. I could deal with that when I was better. And things remained reasonably manageable until the third, maybe the fourth day, when I made the mistake of starting to drink as well.

Normally when I drink beer and take codeine, I just fall asleep. But it had the opposite effect on me this time. I started pacing around my room, faster and faster, until I thought I was in a cage and I just had to get out of there. I couldn't walk very well; in fact I had trouble even finding the door and figuring out how to open it. But somehow I did, and the next thing I knew, I was stumbling past the All Saints Road on my way to Portobello.

Because it was midwinter, it was already dark, even though I don't think it was much past four in the afternoon. Funny, actually, how much I remember, considering the condition I was in. It was very cold, and clear; the nearly full moon seemed to follow me down the street and my breath left enormous clouds of steam trailing in my wake.

As I entered Lily's store, I banged into a display rack of shoes and sent it crashing to the floor. Embarrassed, or at least as embarrassed as I was capable of being, I bent down to pick it up, and fell flat on my face on top of the shoes. From above I could hear a mix of nervous whispers and laughter. With some

effort I lifted my head enough to try and locate Lily, but I couldn't see her anywhere. Forgetting about the mess I had made, I laboriously climbed to my feet and looked wildly around the shop.

"Where is she? Where's Lily? I've got to talk to her." The other shop girls looked at me, seemingly not sure whether they should be nervous or amused or annoyed.

"Um, Lily's gone home early today," one of them finally said. "She was feeling a bit ill."

She was a lousy liar. She wasn't even halfway through the first sentence before I stopped listening to her and resumed looking around the shop for Lily. She had to be hiding here somewhere, though why she would find it necessary to hide from me, I couldn't quite fathom.

I saw a sudden movement of color through the slotted door that led to the back room, and charged toward it. Before I could rip the door open, Lily came out and took a few steps forward, until we stood staring at each other, only inches apart.

"You're frightening the customers," she said. "Please go away."

"Go away? How can you just tell me to go away? Look what you've done to me!" I said, gesturing grandiosely at my inflamed lip.

I was expecting at least something resembling sympathy from her. After all, this whole mess had been mostly her fault. Sure, you could say I didn't have to kiss her, that if I hadn't insisted on having that Hollywood moment, then I wouldn't be in this mess, but as far as I was concerned, that kiss was as fated and inevitable as anything that ever happened in my life.

"Done to you?" she laughed, a strained, nervous sort of laugh that was more like the sound of someone trying to choke back a bout of hysterical screaming. "I haven't done anything to you! It's you that's made my life a nightmare, always following me about, acting like we have some sort of enormously important relationship when in reality I hardly know you!"

"You knew me well enough to give me this!" I half shouted, half slurred. I attempted to once more point at my lip, but succeeded only in awkwardly poking myself in the eye.

The other shopgirls tittered, as did

a couple customers, but Lily flew into a rage that made her look more dramatically beautiful than even I had ever imagined her capable of being.

"I haven't given you anything."

I haven't done anything to you! What is the matter with you? You're psychotic, aren't you? Well, just leave me alone, do you hear me? Leave me alone!"

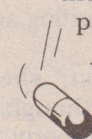
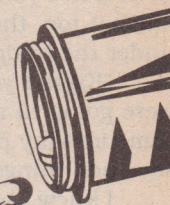
From the way she was screaming, I sensed that perhaps a more diplomatic approach was called for. I stumbled toward her and reached out to put my arms around her. She pulled back, her face an impenetrable mask of loathing and horror, and my arms closed around thin air, nearly causing me to lose my balance again. Somehow, though, I was able to remain upright, and that small victory gave me the courage to carefully frame my next words.

"Look, Lily," I spoke as carefully and assuredly as possible under the circumstances. "I know things have been difficult between us. I know I'm not always easy to understand or get along with. But I wouldn't be making such a big deal about this if I didn't know in my heart that we belong together, that we're going to be together..."

"What?" she screamed. "You've flipped, that's what it is. No, you've been mad all along. I don't know why I didn't see it the minute I laid eyes on you."

Her words might as well have been one of those nagging English drizzles that go on forever and nobody takes any notice of. Growing surer of myself by the moment, I found myself able to pronounce all my syllables without any major dysfunctions.

"It doesn't matter. I've known since the day I met you that I was going to marry you, and I know it more than ever



now. Don't you understand, Lily? You knew it too, the minute you kissed me under the bridge that night."

"Kissed you! I was terrified you were going to rape me! How dare you come into my place of employment and say such things?"

I knew I had her now; she must be really rattled if she felt it necessary to tell lies to cover up what had really happened between us. I moved toward her with a knowing smirk spreading across my face.

"The trouble with you," she was saying, "is that you act as though your life were some sort of bloody J.D. Salinger novel. Well, it's not, there are real people you're inflicting your fantasies on, real consequences you'll have to pay if you don't piss off and leave me alone."

For the first time I was at a loss for words. It wasn't that I was angry, or hurt, or any of that; just that what she had said was so phenomenally stupid. It didn't jibe with my carefully constructed image of her. And she didn't have any business dragging J.D. Salinger into this either.

Maybe it was the incongruity of it all, her faulty literary metaphors, her phony self-righteousness; more likely it was the cumulative effects of the day's codeine and beer. Either the room, or my head, or both, began swirling around perilously. No matter which way I attempted to move, everything else moved in the opposite direction. I remember a lot of shouting, and a deafening crash of shattering glass before I disappeared into a nauseous darkness.

I woke up, not completely to my surprise, in a police cell, bits of what I presumed was my own vomit clinging to my shirt and jacket. The police themselves were reasonably civil, or at least they displayed that brand of politeness that English authority figures are so accomplished at, the quiet, mannered brusqueness that seems so different from the menacing, barely contained brutality of American cops. On the other hand, they made it very clear that if I wanted to avoid spending a good long time in jail, I'd better plan on staying far away from Lily's store, and to be safe, off the Portobello Road altogether.

That did it. I knew that Lily was probably only angry with me, that she

hadn't really meant all those awful and stupid things she'd said, and that if I only had a chance to talk to her when I wasn't blitzed out of my head on codeine and beer, she'd understand what I meant. But I'm essentially a coward, and though I hated myself for it, I knew I wasn't going to risk going to jail, not even for the chance to live happily ever after with Lily.

Which meant, essentially, that my life was over. Not even 19 yet, and everything I could do had been done. It would be a cruel hoax against myself to go through the motions of living, to take up space and befoul other people's vision with the unsightly spectacle of my failure. I vaguely regretted the fact that now I'd never write that novel that would turn out to be the 90s answer to *Catcher In The Rye* (maybe now you can see why Lily had so infuriated me with her thickheaded reference to J.D. Salinger), but a man has to learn to accept his limitations. Without the woman I loved by my side, I knew I'd never be happy or even content enough to write something of real worth.

So I sat down in the park, even though it was miserably cold, and wrote this piece of drivel. It reads sort of like a story, but it's really more of an extended suicide note. Yes, I know it's a horrible cliché, especially for the broken-hearted young man to kill himself over a cruel, uncaring woman, but I'd gotten beyond worrying about appearances.

Actually, that's not completely true, because I was still determined to have as stylish a suicide as possible. I modeled my plans after the failed writer in George Gissing's *New Grub Street*. When his wife ran off with some hack who knew how to work the publishing game for money and prestige, he went wandering off in the dead of winter and climbed up to the top of Battersea Hill, where he took an overdose. Naturally nobody even cared, but at least he went out with some sort of dignity. Besides, I always liked the sound of the name "Battersea."

Unfortunately, I couldn't for the life of me remember how to get to Battersea, let alone Battersea Hill. I knew it was on the other side of the river, though, and I have this kind of prejudice about going south of the Thames. I don't know why; it just seems like every time I go

there something bad happens. Usually it's just a matter of getting hopelessly lost on those faceless and endless grey streets, but once I got mugged, and another time I almost got run over by a taxi. Pretty funny, though, when you think of it, that I decided not to go south of the river to kill myself because I was worried that bad things might happen to me there.

Never mind, I had an alternative plan. There was this place on Hampstead Heath, a hill that was way out in the open and gave you a view of central London way off in the distance. By now it was getting dark and it felt as though it were going to snow, which only made everything more perfect. I could picture myself on that hill, hear the wind howling mercilessly, feel the snow stinging my face, see the lights of London blurring into a merciful yellow haze as the drugs numbed my body and quieted my soul.

Yeah, that was the ticket. I stopped home, grabbed my last two pounds, and called in at the chemist to buy 200 codeine tablets. Oops, I'd forgotten that I'd need bus fare to get to Hampstead Heath. Well, it wouldn't matter, I'd just go on the tube. I'd have to change trains and it would take longer, but it was easy to ride for free.

I got off one stop early, I can't remember if it was on purpose or not, because I'd already eaten about 20 of the codeine tablets to get in a proper mood. I think I had the idea that I would take a long, leisurely stroll to Hampstead Heath, reflecting along the way on the tragedy that had been my life, and then, just as I got to the Heath, I'd eat the rest of the codeine. I'd already nicked a couple cans of lager out of the supermarket to wash down the pills.

But then miserable fate intervened again. I can never remember the name of that intersection, even though I've been there a hundred times, but a bunch of streets come together in a traffic circle and it's kind of dodgy getting across if you're not willing to wait for about six sets of traffic signals to change. So as usual, I just went charging out into the road, trying to weave my way among the cars, and because of the codeine I'd already taken, not doing so well at it.

I heard car horns blaring, and I turned to see where the sound was com-

ing from and to give the finger to any offending drivers. It began to occur to me that I was surrounded by cars going very fast and that I was having a great deal of trouble making my hands or feet do what I wanted them to.

Surely, you think, I could have just thrown myself on the pavement where I was and saved the trouble of a long, cold hike up Hampstead Heath, but I didn't like the esthetics of it. It's very difficult to make anything classy out of a traffic accident. So I attempted to push on across the street.

Just then I heard an enormous blast of a horn that seemed as though it were right on top of me and ten times louder than any I'd yet heard. I turned my head in time to see a red bus bearing down on me at great speed from a distance of about five feet.

What happened next, I don't have an easy explanation for, but the closest I can come to describing it is that it seemed as though I had suddenly learned to fly. And not only to fly, but to fly backwards, soaring like a dead leaf on the cold autumn wind. I remember thinking that it must have looked to anybody watching as though the bus had struck me and sent me sailing, but I knew somehow that I hadn't been touched.

My flight was short-lived, of course; no sooner had I gotten used to the feeling than the concrete slammed from beneath into my back and legs and head. I lay there stunned, watching the departing tail lights of the bus and oblivious to the screaming horns and screeching tires around me.

All the codeine seemed to have been scared out of me, for I could see and think as clearly as I ever have in my life. I spent the longest three or four seconds I expect I will ever experience staring at two figures who stood at the back of the bus that had come so close to killing me.

One of them was the conductor, and he was shaking his fist and mouthing curses at me. Next to him was a little girl, no more than half his height, and her reaction was exactly the opposite. She was laughing until the tears came down her cheeks,

as if the sight of me stretched out on the pavement was the funniest thing she had ever seen.

It felt as though I could see her face far longer than would have seemed possible. Even when the bus was disappearing down the road and its lights were starting to blur into the surroundings, I could still make out the laughter rippling across her angelic little features. The longer I watched, the more hilarious I myself began to think the situation was. By the time I was able to drag myself to my feet, I was laughing uproariously. The crowd who had been drawn by the commotion of a moment before started melting away, obviously afraid that they were in the presence of a madman.

I was still chuckling as I strode back across the traffic circle without even glancing at the oncoming cars. I had little doubt that I was invincible and invulnerable. I considered hopping the next tube back home, but decided against it. It was a nice night, an excellent night, for a walk. A leisurely stroll home from Hampstead should keep me occupied until very nearly morning. It was started to snow, just as I had anticipated.

Without even being fully aware of it, I reached into my pocket, took out the two bottles of codeine, and sent them sailing off into the thickening

darkness. The snow was coming fast and hard now. I didn't even bother to zip up my jacket, and laughed sporadically - when I wasn't gazing in awestruck wonder at the rapidly whitening world - all the way home. By the time I got there, it was growing light, my shoes and clothes were soaking wet, I was shaking wildly and uncontrollably, and London was paralyzed by the biggest snowstorm in ten years.

I didn't even bother turning on the heat, just crawled into bed and stayed asleep for the longest time. When I awoke it was already tomorrow, I was happier than I had ever been in my life, and a silly girl named Lily was at least a million miles removed from anything I considered reality. When I called in at the chemist in Harrow Road later that day, the old Indian once again asked me if I were still ill, but I just bought some cough drops and some kleenex for my runny nose and said, "No, not at all." He seemed to understand exactly what I meant.



MY CORPSE

My Love

"So you're looking to make some extra money," the plump old man said to Alex, who needed an after-school job in the worst way; it was difficult being a student at the Art Institute, where the cost of film and expensive cameras could drive any person into great debt. Alex had searched the city to its limits, looking for a job that would pay a little more than minimum wage and fit into his class schedule. The ad said "JANITORS NEEDED" and it was at that desperate moment that he made the call for the interview.

So, for the first few weeks, Alex ran from school to work, which incidentally was at another nearby college. Taking out the trash, cleaning bathrooms, and picking up after future doctors at the medical school day after day was boring the hell out of Alex.

"You wouldn't be interested in making a little more money would ya' kid?" His boss asked. "You see, there is another job available if you'd be interested."

"Sure, I could use some extra money," Alex said.

The man explained that in the school there was an enormous morgue that was filled with cadavers, which were used as practice patients for the students. Cleaning up in this room was not a task that many desired, so it paid a whole dollar more an hour.

Alex soon found himself overtaken by the strong smell of formaldehyde, but since he needed a better camera now more than ever, he would just have to get used to the odor. Plus in his photography class, his final was to come

up with an exhibit of black and white pictures. Alex decided that he could use his job towards his advantage, since the medieval-like brick exterior of the medical school's library would make an appealing exhibit. So he would just have to

ured out the system of the bodies. The ones in the front were the older ones—they had more parts taken out of them. The ones in the back of the room were the fresh ones, and they bothered Alex to the point that the floor surrounding

get used to the smell.

The morgue was a large, white tiled room. Alex spent his time there mopping the floor and making sure his eyes were always on the floor. He didn't mind the fact that these people were dead, it was just that many of them were disassembled in gross ways—that was something that caused many a ruined after-work dinner for poor Alex.

It did not take long until Alex had fig-

BY BRIAN CZARNIK

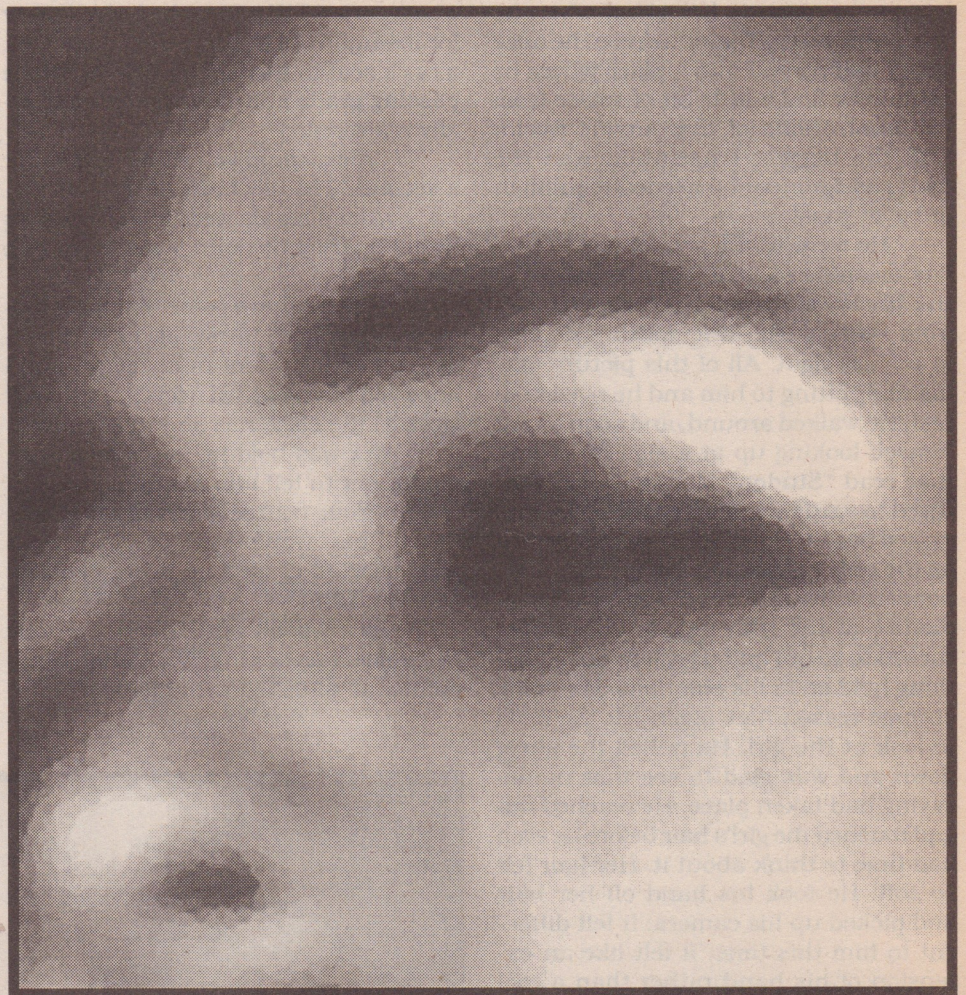


them never got mopped. On one occasion, Alex caught the mop handle on one of the body's coverings, and with one sweeping motion, a set of an old man's eyes were beaming at Alex. The nightmares one could have from such a job. Surprisingly enough, after a few weeks of working there, he had grown completely used to all the smells and even the occasional stare from the dead when the sheet covering them would fall off.

Meanwhile, Alex was taking many pictures of the school's library only to under-develop them in the darkroom. His class final was becoming a disaster.

Alex was in bad spirits one evening after yet another frustrating day in the darkroom. His mopping was a way to let out his aggressions. And his aggressions overcame his fear to go to the back of the room where the newcomers were. Alex was cleaning away when his eyes fixed on this one body. He never paid much attention to the cadavers before, but he knew that most were elderly and they all shared a common shape outlined by a large white sheet. But this one figure was different from the rest. The new, clean sheet draped on the floor over a petite frame.

Alex's curiosity pulled him towards this figure. The only time he had ever made contact with these bodies was when the sheets would slip a little and he would quickly pull them back up. He had never thought about intentionally pulling one down—that is, until now. Alex put his mop down and studied the shape to guess at what might lying under the sheet. He slowly grasped the top corner of the cover and slipped it down. At the immediate touch of hair, he pulled his hand back, dropped the sheet and quickly thought about leaving the body alone. It was at that moment he noticed a lock of long jet black hair falling towards the ground. The hair looked healthy to him and now his interest in the body hit a high point. He couldn't believe himself! Being scared over looking at a stupid dead body; he had seen countless horror flicks and never flinched once, but something was a little different when the bodies were real. With his new-found courage, he again took hold of the sheet. As he pulled it gently over the head he noticed more of this beautiful hair touching his hand. He stopped right before revealing the body's



eyes. something about open eyes on the dead always freaked him out. There was not one wrinkle on the forehead to be found. This body had to be young, he thought. He looked up and searched his feelings for that bit of courage and curiosity he needed to pull the sheet over the eyes. He slowly brought the sheet closer to him, and he could see that luck was on his side, the eyes were closed! And with one quick motion he flipped the sheet away and the whole face and neck were revealed. Alex froze, looking over the body. This was no old hag, but a young girl maybe only a few years younger than he was. How could the world be so cruel to let this creature die? how could she have died, she looked so healthy to him. She looked so beautiful to him.

Her long black hair positioned itself around high cheekbones that met at a perfect jaw. Her closed mouth help outline her full and still reddish lips. The

sheet revealed a little bit of her soft shoulders before it took a small upward twist over her breasts.

Alex had never seen a girl that he had found so attractive. Alex spent a while in a daze, staring at this corpse that he thought just couldn't be dead. But soon he awoke from this trance to pull the sheet back up, and continue his work. For the first time, Alex actually hesitated in closing up the room for the night.

The next day in school was a frustrating one for him; the deadline for his final was getting closer, and the vision he had of that girl kept on invading his mind.

At work, Alex never took the girl's sheet down, but he had fallen into the habit of always placing the girl's cart in the very back, so that she wouldn't be the next victim to the student's dissection. There was a comforting feeling Alex had with her around when he would clean the floor. His eyes always seemed

to wander towards her sheet when he was in the room. The same room he once hated had turned into a place where he could now find a little bit of solace from the frustrations of the outside world. And the biggest frustration was the damn assignment he needed to fulfill in order to pass!

He went to the school one Saturday meaning to take rolls upon rolls of the library's frame. He took pictures from every angle, but nothing seemed to be just right. All of this picture taking was getting to him and he needed to rest. He walked around, and soon found himself looking up at a sign on a door that read "Student Morgue." He ventured towards the back of the room and looked out the small window that served as the only ventilation for the room. He pondered his failure at getting a good picture of the university's library. He turned to go out and try again but something held on to his emotions. For some strange reason Alex again felt the need to look at the girl. He pulled the sheet down and was glad to see that no decaying had taken place. He reached out and touched the girl's hair before he even had time to think about it. Her hair felt so soft. He took his hand off her hair and picked up his camera. It felt different to him this time, it felt like an extension of his hand rather than a tool for school. He took off the lens cap and looked at the girl through the camera. She looked as good as any girl he had seen in ads in magazines, and without a second thought he snapped a picture.

Alex stood there wondering if taking a picture of the dead was breaking any criminal laws—or moral ones. To calm his nerves, Alex walked back to the door and locked himself in the room. He soon found himself gently placing the sheet across her shoulders and moving her into better light in the front of the room. Alex used up the remainder of the roll, pulled the sheet back up and left.

Alex requested that next week off of work so that he could devote his time to developing his pictures of the girl. He chose some close-ups of her face. He enlarged some and cut them out and placed them on a white sheet, entitling the piece "Resting."

The following Monday Alex was a total wreck after turning in his project. Would the teacher notice that his model

was a corpse? Would he be locked away for insanity? All of these questions took a back seat to the fact that he needed a passing grade and that was all that really mattered.

"Alex, could you come in here for a second." His teacher called.

Alex's hands were full of sweat as he got up from the lounge and went into the office.

"Well, we have come to the big moment," she said. "First off, I loved having you as a student in my class, and I hope you have learned a few things. Your work in the class has shown promise."

Alex was holding his breath waiting for her to tell him his final grade.

"Your course work adds up to a C+ and that would have probably been your over-all grade had it not been for your final."

Alex wasn't sure about the tone her voice was taking. Was she disappointed or satisfied with his final?

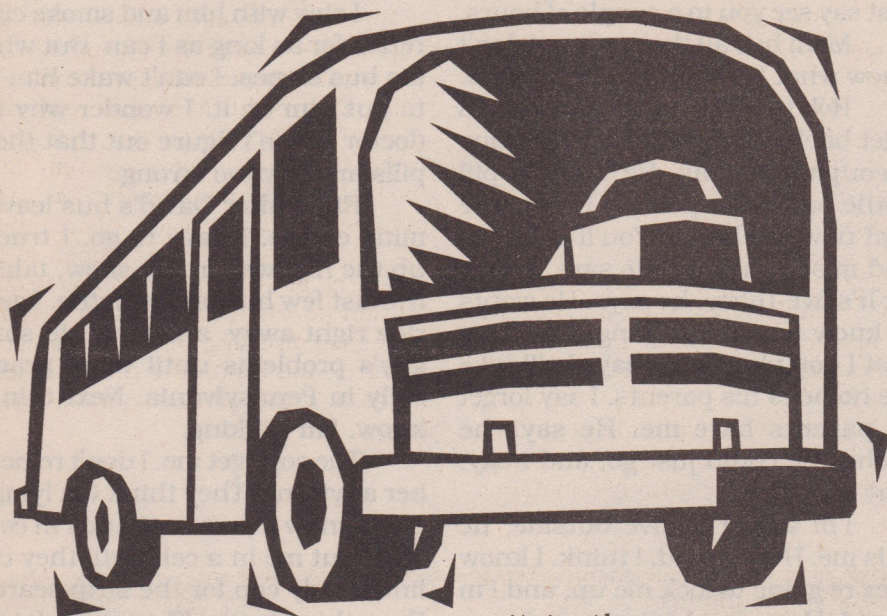
"I just can't help but raise your overall grade to a B+ after that amazing final! The soft lighting, the black and white tones... They were just so professional, Alex." They shook hands and she smiled at him as he walked out of her office with great relief. "Oh, and be sure to thank your model, her skin tone was perfect for that sleeping theme, her face was alive with perfect expression!"

That night, Alex went to work to thank his model. His graded piece was under his arm as he briskly went down the hallway. He unlocked the door to the morgue and went inside. Alex stopped short and his pictures dropped to the floor. The girl he once found so beautiful had now had her head shaved and cut in half revealing her brain. Alex cried in terror and ran out of the room leaving the job, the pictures, and the girl all behind him.



Why Don't You Just Leave?

by Leah Ryan



sit in the
back, by the window.

Seven-fifteen AM. The bus station is dirty. An old man is pushing a yellow mop bucket around. His elbows are pointy, sharp through his blue shirt. My father is standing there, looking at me. He does this. Pretty soon he'll start to cry. Boo hoo hoo. He says all the usual stuff. Take care. Don't make too much trouble for your mother. I say my usual Yeah Yeah Right. Why don't you go? Now the tears, slow fat stupid tears, meandering through his whiskers, quivering on his lip. I have my ticket. I'm all set. Why don't you go. He's mumbling, reaching for my hand. I feel like puking. Why don't you go? Sleep it off. Finally, he goes. I breathe deeply and walk toward the coffee machine which has brown swirley designs on it. I drop in my coins and say hello to the old man. He says Mornin'.

The bus is early, empty. Brand new. Smells like a dentist office. You're supposed to call it a Motor Coach but nobody ever does that. I

I put my bag on the aisle seat and glare at people so they don't sit with me. Nobody does. There are only about ten people on the bus. It is starting to snow. I know that the bus won't stop again for another hour, so I relax. I almost fall asleep. Of course I make sure I'm alert when we stop, so that I can glare at people and keep a whole seat to myself. This one guy gets on and heads toward the back. I fix a stare on him that would knock out a bull. He doesn't get it. He wants to sit with me. I don't know how to say no.

He's not old, maybe eighteen, but he thinks he's a hotshot. He has this stupid painter's cap on backwards. He wants to know my name, all this kind of stuff. He doesn't let up, so I say "Jean," a lie off the top of my head. He says his name is Rob and I say great. The bus is filling up. I'm trapped.

I know some girls, friends of mine, always get come-ons from these rich old guys that want to play

daddy, buy them things. I know others that attract these kinky guys, dog collars and bacon grease and shit. Not me. I get the wackos. They always have problems and want to tell me about them. So this Rob is typical, he's going on and on about how he's in some fancy prep school, and he doesn't like it. My advice? Leave. Just don't go back. I tell him about how I quit school, how I just left. He says where will he go if he doesn't go back to school after Christmas vacation? I say I don't know. How the hell should I know? He says he can't do that just go like that. I say well that's the best advice I've got.

That shuts him up. I get up and go to the john. The bus is stopped in a traffic jam. We're at a tollbooth. There's snow all over the place. I drink half my pint from my jacket pocket, fast as I can. I look in the mirror real quick. I look like hell. Just then the bus starts up and I practically get a concussion on the wall.

When I get back to my seat, Rob is there popping pills. He gives me some line about allergies. He won't sell me any or even let me look at the bottle. A little while later, he's nodding off. Huh. I should have that kind of allergy. Meantime, he's talking to me, like they do, making less and less sense. The bus is skidding all over hell on account of the snow. He says, I love you, Jean, you're beautiful. If the bus crashes and we die it'll be okay. I say, right. He whines about how he's too old for

me. I tell him I'm twenty. He says, you're lying. You're no more than sixteen, he says. Then he passes out. Fifteen, you asshole.

It takes a long time to get to Albany. There are car crashes all over the highway. Rob starts waking up when we pull into the exit ramp and into the city. He starts scratching himself all over. He scratches his arm and I see that he has a hospital bracelet on. Says David Something. Honeysuckle Hill Psychiatric Hospital. A green sticker says: Adolescent Unit.

Rob. Prep School. Allergies. Right. Of course he follows me into the bus station. I tell him, sit down. I point to a chair. I go to finish my pint and to call my mother. Over my shoulder I can see him sitting there.

I call collect, Mom accepts the charges. Where are you, she says. What's going on? I tell her I'm in Albany, which is about an hour from where she lives.

A month before, dad was supposed to call mom and ask if I could live with her. He told me that he'd called her. He said she was all excited to have me living with her again. That's what he said.

He called just this morning, she tells me. He said he was putting you on a bus and that he would send your things later. I'm not crazy about this, she tells me. You can stay for school vacation, but then we'll have to see.

I can't believe what I'm hearing.

We can try it, she says. But this time, no more skipping school, no running away. No staying out until all hours.

I want to tell her the real reason I'm coming back, the reason dad put me on that bus. It was the way he looked at me. People knew something wasn't right.

You have to maintain at least a "C" average and be use-

ful around the house, she says.

It was the way he touched me. I want to tell her. Maybe it was his wife, finally said to get rid of me. I never know what's going on. I want to tell her this so bad but instead I just say see you in a couple of hours.

Mom has all these rules. I don't know what to do. I can't be normal.

Rob is sitting in his chair when I get back. Hi, David, I say. We buy a couple of sodas. He takes a pill bottle out of his pocket. Don't take that now, I tell him. You'll pass out and miss your bus. He says he has to. It's five-thirty, he says. He wants to know where I'm going. I tell him that I don't know. He says he'll take me home to his parents. I say forget it, parents hate me. He says he wishes he could just go, and I say, why don't you?

I'm afraid to live outside, he tells me. How stupid, I think. I know they're going to lock me up, and I'm afraid. He's afraid to get out.

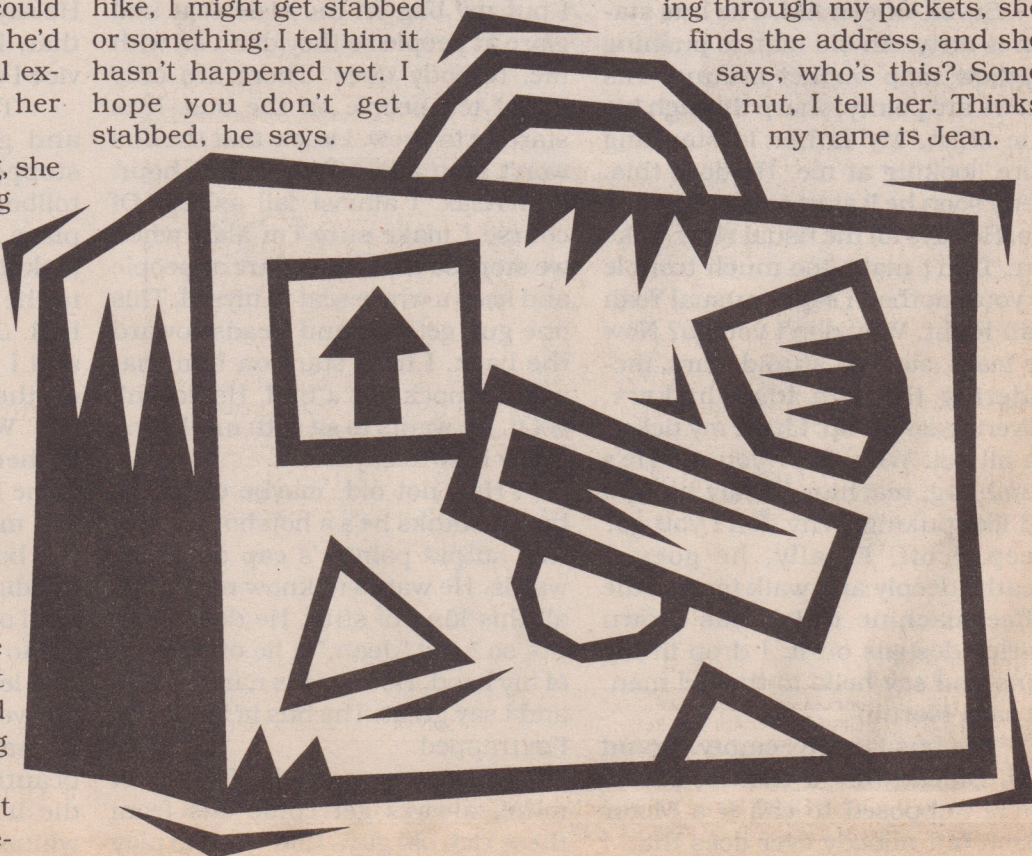
He reminds me that if I hitchhike, I might get stabbed or something. I tell him it hasn't happened yet. I hope you don't get stabbed, he says.

After we sit down I can see that he's already getting wasted. He picks up a candy wrapper from the floor and writes down his name and hospital address on it. Of course he has a ball-point pen.

I stay with him and smoke cigarettes for as long as I can. But when his bus comes, I can't wake him up to put him on it. I wonder why his doctor doesn't figure out that those pills are way too strong.

Right after David's bus leaves, mine comes. I have to go. I trudge up the highway in the snow, taking the last few hits off my bottle. I get a ride right away, and listen to some guy's problems until we're practically in Pennsylvania. Next thing I know, I'm walking.

The cops get me. I don't remember anything. They think I'm lying. I don't know where I am and I'm cold. They put me in a cell until they can find a lady cop for the strip search. Everything hurts. They won't let me smoke. I'm too young to smoke. Going through my pockets, she finds the address, and she says, who's this? Some nut, I tell her. Thinks my name is Jean.



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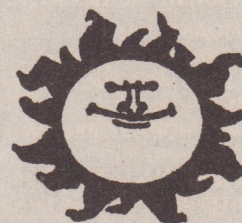
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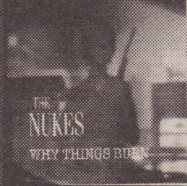
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Music isn't Harmless

By Chris Seymour

an article guaranteed to piss someone off...

"Music is not harmless," says English singer and guitarist Martin Carthy—although "a whole industry is devoted to trying to make it harmless."

The industry, he charges, tries "to get people inured to music, by playing it to them in lifts, by playing it to them in airports all the time."

Though the sentiments sound familiar to punks, Carthy's weapon against Muzak is ... folk music. He maintains that traditional songs are a lot more relevant—and a lot more subversive—than much of the "product" generated by the music business today.

A case in point is "The Poacher," which I heard Carthy perform with fiddler Dave Swarbrick at the Cherry Tree Music Coop in Philadelphia. It's the story of a man transported—shipped to the colonies—for illegal hunting, but you'd probably miss the element of class warfare if Carthy didn't lay it out for you:

"This song has a smooth surface with an awful lot going on underneath," he told the near-capacity audience. "The vast majority of transports were first offenders—never planned it—did it on impulse, for reasons of starvation. You get a feeling the gamekeepers set him up."

"Lucy Wan" needed no such explanation: it's about incest. The song's eerie modal melody fit the subject perfectly, and the way Swarbrick's smooth fiddle slid in and out around Carthy's guitar made it hard to believe the tune had only five notes. Carthy said that when he learned "Lucy Wan" in 1964 he thought incest was a thing of the past. He was shocked when a social worker friend told him it was the problem she had to deal with most often.

The highlight of the evening was Carthy's current favorite, "The Lochmaben Harper," a song with a sprightly tune that Swarbrick went to town on. It's the story of a blind harper who, leaning on his wife's wits, bests two noblemen who get him drunk and make him a ruinous wager they think he can't possibly win.

Carthy tells the audience the song didn't make sense to him until he learned a key piece of information: A "blind harper" isn't a mysterious, magical figure with a long white cloak blowing in the wind. In the slang of the period, a blind harper is "a bloke who lets on he's blind and plays for alms in the street." And, Carthy adds, by betting the underprivileged harper 5,000 pounds that he can't steal the king's favorite horse, the noblemen are deliberately trying to destroy him (class warfare again). If he fails, the harper will end up in debtors' prison for being unable to make good his bet.

In an interview the day after the Cherry Tree performance, Carthy called "The Lochmaben Harper" "mischievously subversive: An ordinary person—in this case a musician, which appeals to me, obviously—lies, tricks those who consider themselves to be better than him, steals, gets huge amounts of money by deception. That's pretty subversive."

Carthy, 51, was a major figure in the folk revival of the 1960s, developing a unique guitar style that manages to be both percussive and melodic. He did a brief stint in the early 1970s with Steeleye Span. Steeleye and Fairport Convention, which Swarbrick co-founded, were the first bands to fuse traditional music with a rock beat and electric instruments. Carthy and Swarbrick have been playing together off and on for over 25 years.

It's a left thing

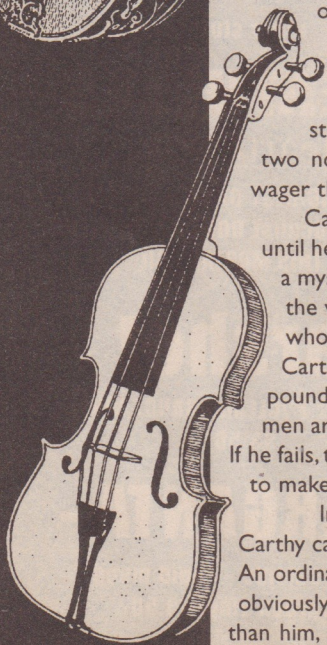
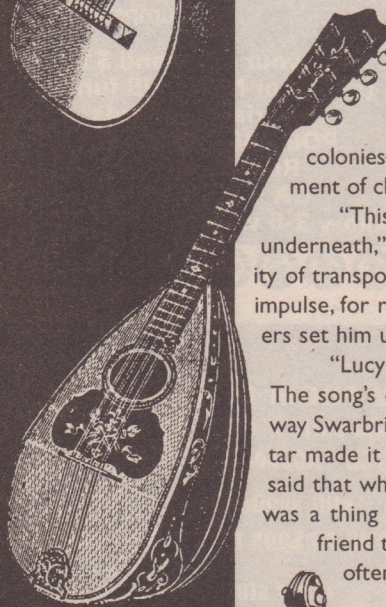
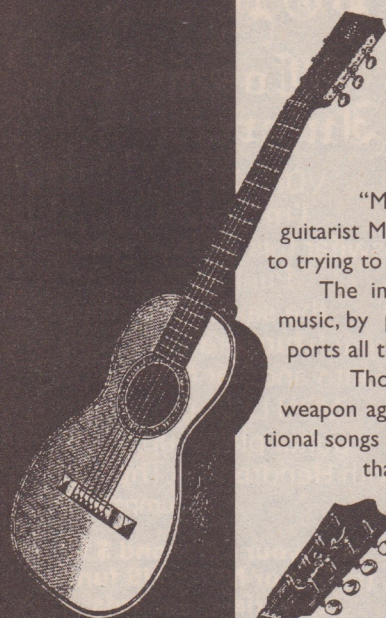
Carthy describes the English revival—which actually started as a fascination with American folk music—as initially "a general lefty thing." The early folk scene, he recalls, was intertwined with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the anti-apartheid movement, with heavy Communist Party involvement.

Carthy grew up with a trade unionist father and a socialist-Christian mother, and rebelled by moving further to the left. "We disagreed on CND. I was a member and they thought it was rubbish." But he doesn't contend that all traditional music is left-wing. "Elijah Wald from the Boston Globe quoted me as saying I thought traditional music was socialist, and I don't. I think a strand of it is, and that's the strand I choose to follow."

Somewhere along the line, though, some folkies on both sides of the Atlantic got absorbed into what Carthy calls "the heritage industry." They began singing pretty songs nicely arranged but devoid of content or context, cooperating with the attempt to lump traditional music in with the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace and other dead rituals.

Carthy realized how much the folk scene had changed during the 1982 Falklands War. At first, Carthy remembers, no songwriters would touch the topic. Then at a folk festival he and his wife, singer Norma Waterson, heard rock-and-roller Jim Woodland sing a Falklands song he had written. "He was booed," Carthy says, still incredulous. "I remember standing up with Norma and the others and yelling and shouting and cheering and clapping while these assholes booed. And then I determined to try and write something."

"It took me ages because I'd never written a song before. I finally finished something



and showed it to a friend of mine, and her comment was great, actually. It sent me right back to the drawing board—best thing anybody'd ever done for me. She said, 'I think the bit I like the least is the bit you like the best.' And I really trusted her, and I went back and left out the bit that I liked the best—eventually—and made a much better song for it."

Sell me a song

Carthy is "deeply disappointed" with many U.S. folk-tinged singer-songwriters, who he thinks would do better if they wrote less and listened more to the traditional songs that represent their roots.

"They talk a great song," he complains. "But when they actually come to deliver, what they deliver is the most abject pap. ... Everybody's holding hands and patting each other on the back and rocking from side to side, and it's like Lawrence Welk."

Part of the problem, of course, is profit. After the Beatles started doing their own material, "Record companies demanded that people write songs, because there's a lot more money in it. Everybody makes more money. The turnover goes up enormously. You can't make any money out of traditional song. ... And that's the way it should be."

Actually, you can, if you're unscrupulous, as Carthy found out in an encounter with Paul Simon almost 30 years ago that still rankles.

"The guy comes to dinner as an uninvited guest with Tom Paxton," Carthy recalls. "And he's asked for 'Scarborough Fair,' and I gave him the whole thing—and he went out and copyrighted it. ... It's a traditional song ... At the very least it's the most incredibly bad manners."

The song, truncated, labeled "words and music by Paul Simon," and mixed in with Art Garfunkel's "Canticle," was a hit for Simon and Garfunkel in 1966.

Carthy has kinder words for another pop star with folk roots: Bob Dylan, who has recorded two albums of mostly traditional songs in the last couple of years. "I like the way he sings the songs. It's not pretty, and his voice does sound as though he's been singing non-stop for the last God-knows how many years. But he's got a nice simple approach."

Taking on critics who have dismissed Dylan's folk background as a "phase," Carthy says he doesn't think Dylan ever strayed that far from folk. "He's always been more than just interested in folk music—He's always loved it. In interviews he's revealed his bewilderment at the way it's not taken seriously."

Folkies: The Next Generation

Carthy and Swarbrick's audience in Philadelphia tended toward middle age. With singer-songwriters ascendant on the folk scene, does Carthy worry that traditional music will die out?

"It's skipped a generation," he explains. At least it has in England, where he says "There's this whole raft of 17-24 year-olds," including his and Norma Waterson's daughter, Eliza, "who are increasingly fascinated by it, and some of them are bloody good at it."

A lot of these young traditional musicians poring over the songbooks of old collectors and listening intently to scratchy field recordings are women, Carthy says. The folk singers of his generation "are holding our breath and hoping that the women don't marry and start having babies and stay at home, so that just men end up going round the folk clubs, which is what happened to us. The women stopped. ... I couldn't bear it if that happened to Liza, because she wants to make music her life, and there's no doubt in my mind that she could do that."

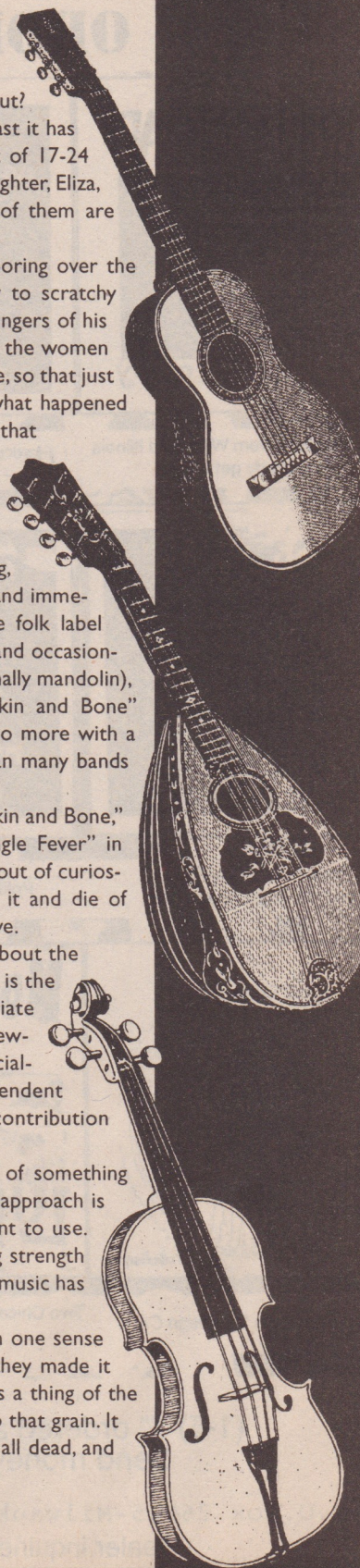
Carthy and Swarbrick's 1991 release, "Life and Limb," was recorded live, and their 1992 offering, "Skin and Bone" sounds like it was—it's that clear and immediate. (Both are available in this country on indie folk label Green Linnet.) With Carthy on guitar and vocals (and occasionally mandolin) and Swarbrick on fiddle (and occasionally mandolin), no overdubbing and nobody else, you'd think "Skin and Bone" would be as spare as its title. But these two can do more with a couple of instruments and a set of vocal cords than many bands can do with a lot more hardware.

"Lucy Wan" and "The Poacher" appear on "Skin and Bone," as does "The Brown Girl," a sort of reverse "Jungle Fever" in which the white guy dallies with a woman of color out of curiosity and fascination, only to spurn her, then regret it and die of heartbreak she is understandably reluctant to relieve.

The album also features a couple of songs about the Gulf War. "Perfumes of Arabia," by Maggie Holland, is the more successful of the pair. Mustering an appropriate line from Lady Macbeth, Holland's lyrics deftly skewer sports-like media coverage of the carnage, "socially responsible" capitalist ventures, and car-dependent war opponents who ignore their oil addiction's contribution to the carnage.

Carthy clearly sees himself as a small part of something much bigger than himself, but he demurs when his approach is described as humble. "Humility is not a word I want to use. As far as I'm concerned it's a matter of recognizing strength when you see it—real spine. That's what I think folk music has in spades."

"I'm a real Beatles fan," he continues, "but in one sense the Beatles did nobody any favors at all, because they made it the law that people must do their own thing. That's a thing of the me generation, and folk music runs right counter to that grain. It says 'it ain't me; it's us,' and if it ain't us then we're all dead, and we're all wasting our fucking time."



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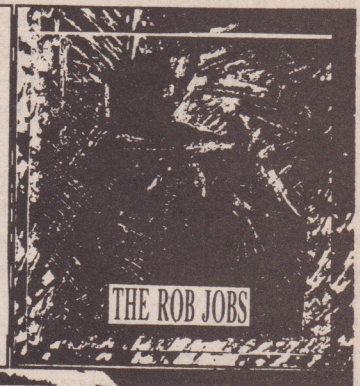
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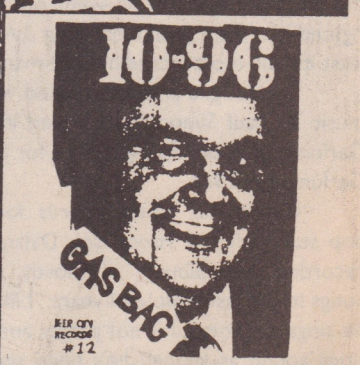
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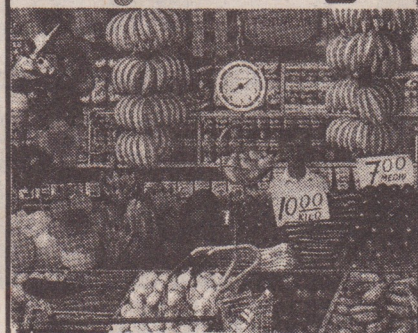
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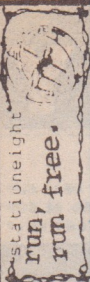


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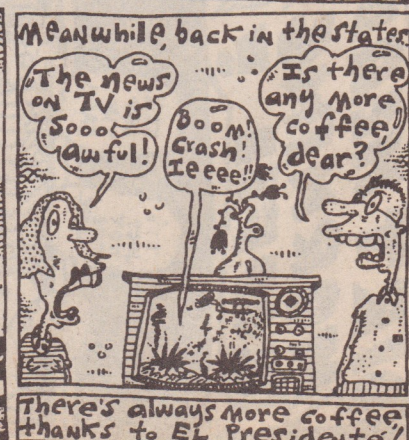
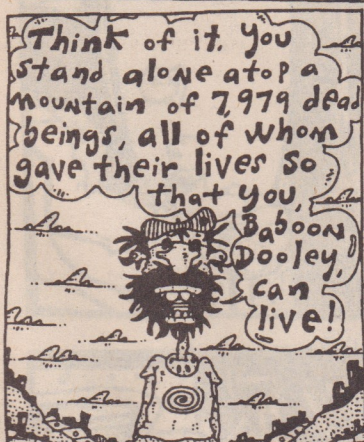
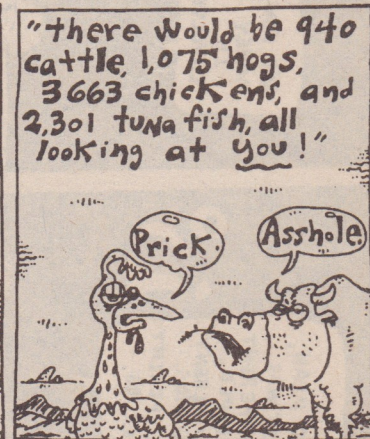
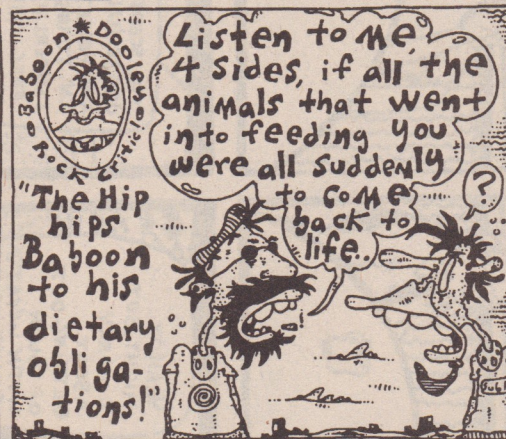
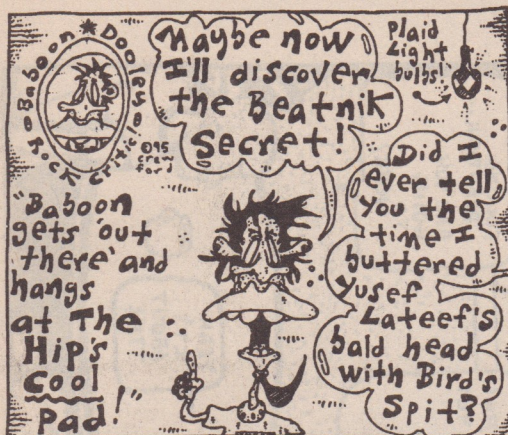
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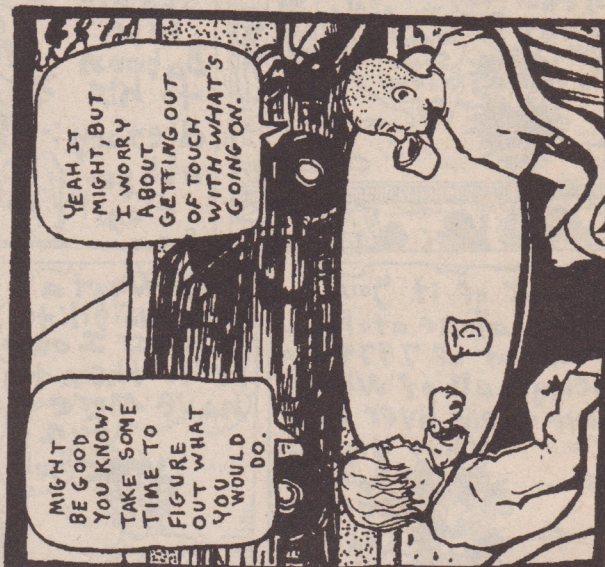
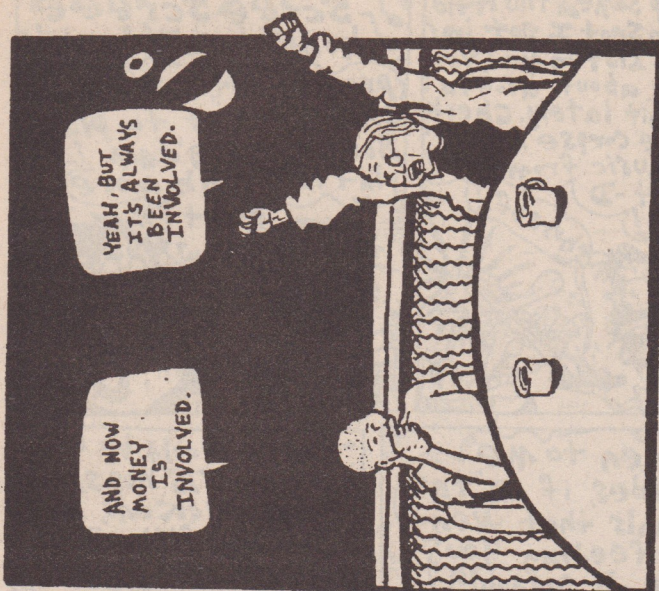
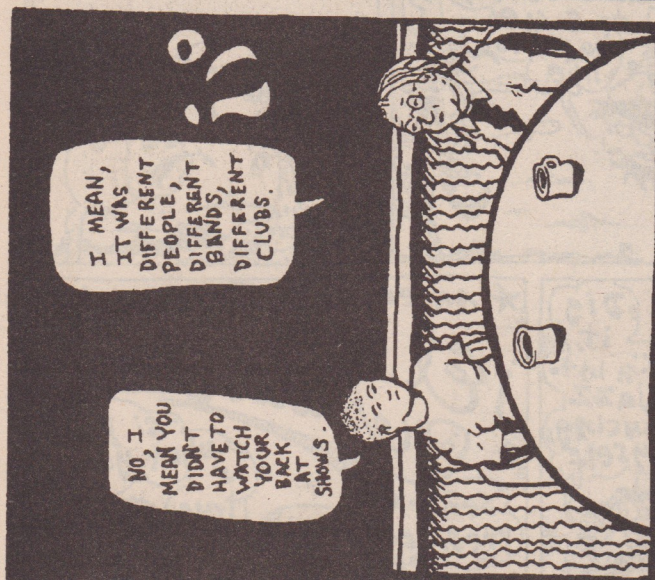
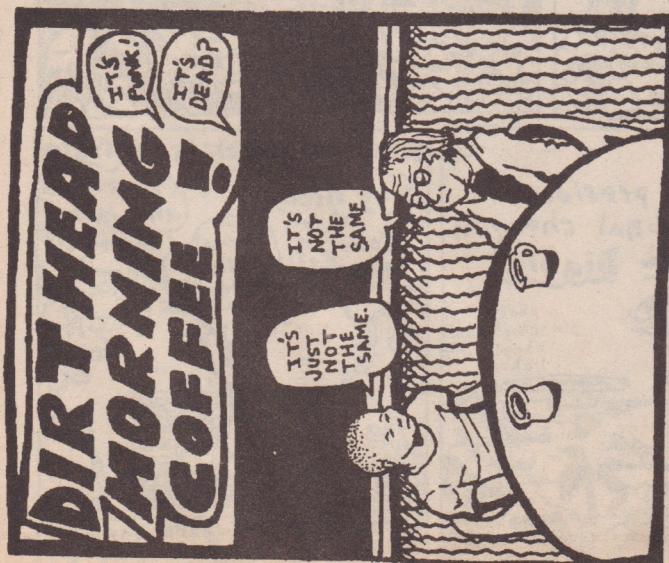


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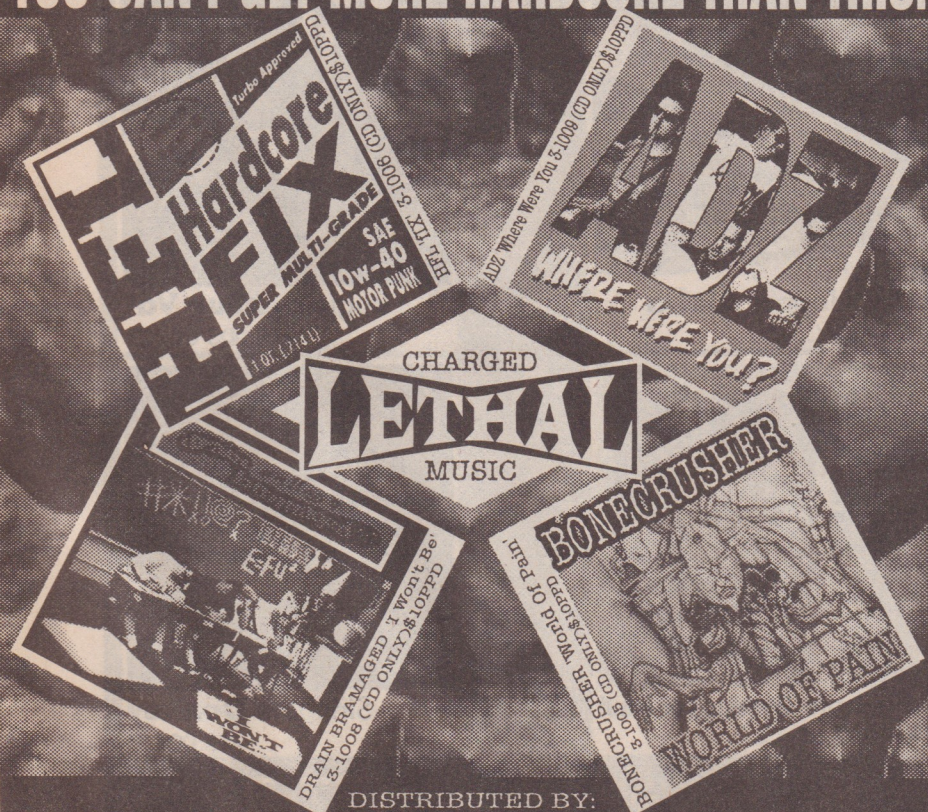
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So you want to start your own label?

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A) To put out your own band's material because no one else will. Great!

B) To give an opportunity to bands to broaden their audience and make a record of their efforts. Great!

C) Because you are tired of working at your lousy job and you always wanted to be your own boss, dress like you want at work, go to shows, and make a lot of money like Gerard Cosloy or Jon and Bruce at SubPop. *Proceed with caution!!!*

Once you figure out why, the next step is to set up a practical goal for the first release. Even if you have tons of money to spend I would suggest starting small and simple and investing more once you figure out what the hell you are doing.

For your first release select a band that you know will get involved in the promotion and selling of the records. As long as the band doesn't break up and continues to play shows and tour you can almost be guaranteed eventually selling enough records to be able to make new releases. I recently

did an inventory of my label's stock and found that almost all of the releases that did poorly were by bands that no longer existed. Even the slow movers by little-known bands eventually sold out as long as the band stayed together and active.

Other ways of selling records are selling them directly to stores (watch consignment), mail-order (you actually get paid!) and through distributors.

Distributors are one of the reasons why many small labels go belly-up. They are notorious for not paying or paying late, going out of business before paying you or returning records, and generally wasting a lot of your time and energy. Most of the time they will only pay up when you have a new release that they want to get. So unless you have enough money for a few releases steer clear of giving distributors too much of your stock. Nothing is worse than having a band leave for a tour with no records because a distributor is sitting on hundreds of copies of a release as well as the invoice.

Ads are one way to let people outside your local area know about your label and releases. Unless you are selling something by a band that

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people already know, do not expect a major change in sales due to ads. Ads are most effective when people are already familiar with the band or label. I do think it is good to take out a few small ads to let people know what is available, but don't overspend.

Don't expect a lot of mail-order from ads either. An ad featuring a new release usually yields only a handful of orders, certainly not enough to justify ads for mail-order alone. You are likely to receive more demo tapes than orders for records in response to your ad.

Press is a much more cost effective way to let people know about your releases. A good review in a zine can generate much more interest in a record than a bunch of ads. Also, many zines will interview or feature a band with a new release. Some magazines like Maximum Rocknroll and Punk Planet encourage people to send in interviews so take advantage of this form of cheap advertisement. Know the zines whom you are sending promo to and realize that if you send copies of your release to Rolling Stone, Spin, Billboard, etc. they are probably going to end up in the dumpster.

Radio is another way to familiarize people with your records. College stations are almost the only remaining type of radio station that will play independent, unsolicited stuff. Even so, the competition for airtime is tighter than it

was years ago. Major labels are now courting college radio with multiple copies of records, T-shirts, and free passes to shows. Get to know your local college stations. Many will do interviews with bands and even set up live radio performances.

Unless you are made of money, don't send out promo copies without knowing a little about the stations that you are sending records to. Some stations do not play 7"s at all and some have little or no audience. Once I was on tour in Columbus, Ohio and did a radio show. We tried to give T-shirts away on the air and no one called in. We later found out that the station was an intra-college cable radio station that could only be listened to while waiting on hold within the college's telephone system!

I hope this info is helpful. I know I haven't touched on how to record the bands, press the records, press runs, promo and ad copy, accounting, and tons of other stuff vital to starting a label, but there is only so much space. If you have any questions feel free to call me at 212-691-4041 9am-9pm EST and I would be happy to help out with info or you can E-mail me at grape@panix.com

Tom Cassar

Tom Cassar along with partner Jim Fourniadis run Vital Music Records which since 1989 has put out over 30 releases. He also plays bass for Sea Monkeys and solely runs Vital Music Mailorder which sells hundreds of independent 5", 7"s, 8"s, 10"s, LPs, CDs and more.

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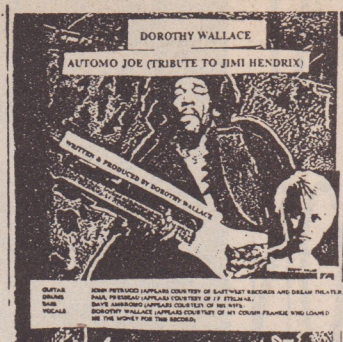
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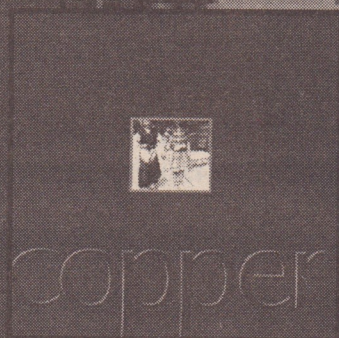
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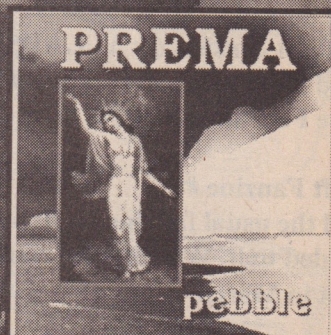
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Reviews. Ugh. I'm sick. I'm tired. Ugh. Eric Action (EA), Matt Berland (MB), Darren Cahr (DC), Steve Cook (SC), Will Dandy (WD), Jon Entropy (JE), Karen Fisher (KF), Bret Van Horn (BVH), Dave Larson (DL), Dan Sinker (DS), Davis Selevan (DS2), Sean Wipfli (SW), John Zero (JZ)

Where every record is guaranteed a dandy review!

ABIHINANDA-SENSELESS, CD

I've been wanting to hear this band for a long time and now that I have I'm not disappointed at all. Well, it may have a bit more of a metal influence than I like, but it's still pretty cool. Abihinanda are a Straight Edge band from Sweden, but for the most part sound like they could be from the states. This is an exceptional record — the best hardcore I've heard from overseas, think. To top it off they've got pretty intelligent lyrics, too. American S.E. could probably learn a lot from the Europeans as far as politics go.

(DL)

Desperate Fight Records Kemig 16, 90731 Umea Sweden

ACTIVE INGREDIENTS, 7"

NOFX style fast-paced punk, not unlike many of the old Mystic records bands of the mid '80's. Tight performances which aren't always on the forefront of originality, but worthwhile if you dig the aforementioned influences a lot. Four songs. (BVH)

(Beer City Records; P.O. Box 494 Milwaukee, WI 53122-0494)

ANGUISH-S/T, 7"

Hmm.. Well this band has the same name as the band I'm in, but luckily we sound nothing alike. This Anguish is metally hardcore stuff with lots of double bass and eerie breaks reminding me of black metal. Now that I've listened to more of it this strongly reminds me of new york hardcore like Sick of It All or Biohazard mixed with doomy/evil sounding metal like Venom with that neat double bass. Call me a headbanger, but I actually kinda like this. (J.E.)

(Dark Empire; PO Box 770213 Lakewood, OH 44107)

APARTMENT 213-VACANCY, 7"

Oooh! This is one of the best grindcore bands that I think I've EVER heard. Incredible, tight, good quality fast parts mixed with cool sludgy parts that make you wanna bop up and down (sounds a little silly, eh?) and lots of random screams for fun which any good grind band needs. The samples are really frightening too. Just great stuff. Highly recommended if you like this genre. I know I do. Even if they do have a song called "kill for christ." (WD)

(\$3; Dark Empire; PO Box 770213 Lakewood, OH 44107)

APOCALYPSE HOBOKEN-DATE RAPE NATION, 2x7"

Really great fold out packaging and red vinyl. Simple lyrics and music, a lot of people might enjoy this record, I don't. I would compare it to Pennywise or other fast paced surf hardcore. (DS2)

(Apocalypse Hoboken Po Box 88742 Carol Stream, IL 60188)

ASPHALT-357 KNOCKOUT, CD

It's heavy at least... Kinda metalish, kinda mosh, kinda HELMET, but I won't listen to this again. Get the Apartment 213 7" this label put out, but avoid this like the plague. I don't know what to call it, but it sure smells funny. (SW)

(Dark Empire; PO Box 770213 Lakewood, OH 44107)

BEHIND THE SMILE/JUGGLING JUGULARS-SPLIT 7"

Both these bands are talented European HC bands that play

solid melodic hardcore. BTS is a French emo band that was my favorite of this release. Their lyric sheet was filled with rants about each of the songs and the music was melodic and easily listenable. My favorite song is their love song (sorta) called "drifting apart." JJ plays similarly influenced music although there is more of a SoCal hardcore influence. This is a great release. Both bands are very DIY and have great lyrics.

(JZ)

(\$5wld; \$4eurp; Columbo Waz There; c/o Philippe; 14 cite Aquitaine, 59222; Bousies, FRANCE)

BLACK ANGEL'S DEATH SONG-DUE RAGGAZZE, CD

OK, this is very well produced and it's obvious that these musicians have spent a lot of time on this record. I can't say I like the music very much though. They're very talented at what they do, but their music is just a bit too poppy for my tastes. They sound very similar to a folkie Lemonheads without any hit songs. I hate to say it but I think they sound a little bit like the Pixies on Trompe Le Monde. The music's nowhere near as good, but there's an obvious influence there. This is a decent release for the kind of music it is. (JZ)

(HellYeah; Box 1975; Burbank, CA 91507)

BLINDFOLD-WORLD OF FOOLS, 7"

I guess you'd call them a Belgian emo band. I really liked them, and while their lyrics are pretentious and heavy handed, you can forgive them that (they are Belgian, after all, and Europeans are not known for their subtle punk lyrics) and their music makes up for it anyway. A slow burn, with a great intensity. If their lyrics are not understated, their music is, and to great effect. Good, promising single. (DC)

(Machination Records, Jeon, P.O. Box 90, 8500 Kortrijk, Belgium)

BLUEPRINT/BADGER, 7"

2 poppy bands who know the genre well. This is easily on par with the best of power pop going around. Think Farside, think whatever you wanna think. Melodic, harmonic, emotional, interesting. (MB)

(Abridged; PO Box 1888; Clute, TX 77531-1888)

BLUEPRINT-COME ON BY, 7"

Very poppy. First thought in my head was Samiam, but a melodic hardcore influence, as well. Puts a spring in my step and a sparkle in my eyes. This one's a keeper. (MB)

(Abridged; PO Box 1888; Clute, TX 77531-1888)

THE BOLLWEEVILS-THE HISTORY OF THE BOLLWEEVILS PART I

This was a pleasant surprise. I expected for their older stuff to be a real let down from the cool power punk they turn out now, but I was sure wrong. This rocks from beginning to end. All their stuff on 7"s and tape compiled on one album. This is really cool. Very similar to Rhythm Collision or another cool Dr Strange band. Definitely worth getting. (WD)

(DR Strange; PO Box 7000-117; ALta-Loma, CA 91701)

BOMBRAID-ELEGIES FROM A CLOSED CHAPTER 7"

Abrasive sandpaper to braincells guitar fuels this Swede hXc unit. Full

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on Discharge style attacks, but far more energetic and hard hitting than most bands who do this tuff! Great record to flail/stagger around the room and break shit to! (SW)
(Crash Mag, Sweden)

BRINE—OPERATION MANUAL, 7"

This sounds a lot like an updated version of Plaid Retina's 1st 7" on Lookout. Snotty speedy hardcore, that breaks the monotony with slow parts (not mosh, mind you). It all works together in the big mish-mosh. (MB)
(Amendment; 580 Nansemond cres.; Portsmouth, VA 23707)

THE BRISTLES—GENERATION ANNILATION, 7"

Well I was pretty mean to the last Beer City release (Chronic Thrill), but the music forced me to do that. On the other hand, THIS RULES! The Bristles are true 77 punk rock. you can sing along and pogo all night and it makes you feel damn good to know 77 punk is here to stay. I'm gonna go spike my hair now. (J.E.)
(Beer City Records; PO Box 494 Milwaukee, WI 53122)

THE BRISTLES—S/T, 7"

Any band willing to put skulls with mohawks sword fighting on its cover has got to have something to talk about. And they do. This is really good '77 stuff. It reminds me a lot of early Blanks '77. Catchy sing-along songs about hating society. Grab another beer, the parties just begun. He he he. Really good. (WD)
(Beer City Records; PO Box 494 Milwaukee, WI 53122)

BUILT TO SPILL—THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH LOVE, LP

This album has been playing constantly on many audio devices around town here lately. Doug Martsch (Ex-Treepeople) seems to have found the perfect balance between the Treepeople pop-punk/wanking and the psychedelia of Built to Spill's first L.P. Endless melodies fill the sound waves while the playful lyrics create a view of world that most of us wouldn't normally see. Perfect music for a rainy day. (BVH)
(Up Records; 21328 Seattle, WA 98111)

BUTT LYNT—CASSETTE

Decent, tight, metal-tinged hardcore. and despite the bad band name and obvious sarcastic attitudes about half of the lyrics are serious. Probably a good live band if they're as obnoxious as parts of this tape (SWV)
(4224 13th ave ct; rock island, IL 61201)

BUZZKILL—I FEEL LIKE MYSELF AGAIN, CD

Seven songs of pure wanna-be big time rock-thrash-metal stuff. The last song sounds a little too much like Alice in Chains for my own taste, but not bad for someone looking for some basic thrash/grunge stuff. (BVH)
(Antidote Records; P.O. Box 505 New Brunswick, NJ 08901)

CAR VS. DRIVER—DEJA GRATEFUL, LP

Where the hell did this come from?! This is AWESOME! Seriously, this may be the best record I've ever been sent to review. I live for finding records like this. Intricate Emo-y stuff that sounds a little like Monsula at times and even a little like Ned's Atomic Dustbin (In a GOOD way, I promise), but is all very original and great and wonderful. I would have killed to put out this record. (DL)
Lunchbox Records P.O. Box 55361 Atlanta, GA 30308

THE CAVE 4—S/T, 7"

This is great. Finally a record that I can explain to you exactly what it is in three words or less. 60's surf rock. Entirely instrumental complete with silly beach art on the jacket, this is a record I could definitely listen to more than once. What else is there to say except this is swell. One complaint, I think these are

all cover tunes. (JZ)
(Dionysus; Box 1975; Burbank; CA 91507)

THE CHAMPIONS—ONCE AND FUTURE KING, 7"

While the recording quality doesn't even compare, parts of this record remind me of Earth Crisis. They one up EC in the politics department with their song "Hangers", which is a pro-choice song. "A sisters quiet suffering is the factual silent scream, the goddess must be sleeping and this must be a dream". Most hardcore bands don't write lyrics like that. Not the best record I've heard lately but at least they've got that much right. (DL)
Moo Cow Records 38 Larch Circle Belmont, MA 02178

CHEZACUT, 7"

Imagine a DC based noisy pre-modern-emo band from a few years ago. Now imagine the vocalist sang (and wasn't top bad, either). I can't really help you beyond that except to say that I thought the sleeve was really cool. (MB)
(505 W. South Ave.; Houghton, MI 49931)

THE CHUBBIES—SHE'S YOUR DAUGHTER SAM, 7"

The singer sounds like she's sucking down some helium on the first track of this single. That's kind of a shame, because she has a capable voice that's pretty well suited for this kind of basic guitar/bass/drums pop. On the other hand, the moment when I thought my turntable was at the wrong speed was the most attention-grabbing moment of this album, so hey. Workmanlike on the a-side, better on the b-side. Five average to slightly above average pop songs. Your call. (SC)
(Kantzalis Records, 1034 W. 1 St. #173, Ontario CA 91762)

CORPUS CHRSTI/FORCA MACABRA—SPLIT 7"

Unintelligible noise. CC takes a more political bent to it, but it's still noise. This isn't really that bad, it's just that so many euro punk bands have sounded exactly like this over the past 15 years that it gets old after a while. Its the kind of music you'd like to tighten a vice grips on your head to, or drive an electric drill through your skull. The FM side is more dark than CC. They sing about death and moshing to die and all that fun shit. Well, I think I'll go kick the crap out of my dog now. (JZ)
(Genet Records. PO Box 47; 9000 GEnt 1 ; Belgium)

CROP DOGS—WAVE MOTION GUN, CD

With a title like that, it's got to be great. Actually, it's kind of basic. Good, basic, rock-pop-punk. It doesn't stand me on end or anything but I will go back and listen to it now and then. It sort of sounds like that Spoke CD. (DL)
Round Flat Records 63 Lennox Ave Buffalo, NY 14226

THE CRUSADERS—YEAH YEAH, 7"

Standard, noisy, 60's, retro-garage stuff from Australia. One instrumental/surf thingy, one thing with chanting, wild man, non-sense



sounding vocals, another surfy thing and another crazy man thing. Pass me the 80's, at least. Please. (BVH)

(Dionysus; P.O. Box 1975 Burbank, CA 91507)

THE DERELICTS—GOING OUT OF STYLE 1986–1990, CD

This is a very comprehensive anthology of the life span of Seattle's notorious Derelicts. Over their four-year span, these guys played with every Seattle band from Alice in Chains, to Nirvana, to Gas Huffer, even Whipped and Jesters of Chaos. This CD proves that the Derelicts sonic punk assault appeal was as varied as their songs were uniform in arrangement. Catchy punk which doesn't seem as infectious at first as it ends up being in the end. (BVH)

(Empty; P.O. Box 12034 Seattle, WA 98102)

THE DERITA SISTERS AND JR—ROCKETSHIPS AND BULLETS, CD

Kinda bad geekypop punk new wave with totally silly lyrics about jerking off boners beer and killing michael bolton. not totally without merit, with over 30 songs there are a few great one minute punkers in here... cant say i'd buy one, but tunes like "homeless people suck" "mad at everyone" have a certain charm...no sisters, no jars, no one named derite either. (SW)

(Real George; PO Box 15602; North Hollywood, CA 91615)

DIRTY ROTTEN FINKS, 7"

Totally authentic sounding surf instrumentals, with plenty of hooks to last for all four songs. There's something to be said for a lack of words... a welcome break from all of the screaming and shouting I've heard so far... (BVH)

(Dionysus; P.O. Box 1975 Burbank, CA 91507)

DOG FACED HERMANS—THOSE DEEP BUDS, CD

Jazzy art punk w/ lots of sax, sonic youthisms galore and nonsense lyrics. None of these songs really grab me, and most of 'em clock in around five minutes. Dragged on so long I almost started fast forwarding through songs! Thumbs down, off wit der heads! (SW)

(Alternative Tentacles)

DOG POUND—THE FORWARD LOOK, CD

Ok, I have an interesting history with these guys. We got their 7" for review. I heard it, didn't like it. Found it bland. Then they came here, I saw them play, I ate it up, thought it was incredible, bought a demo tape. Yeha! Then their 7" got a bad review here, we got an angry letter, and now this Cd comes rolling in. I immediately swooped down on it, because I fucking loved them live. Well, this isn't what I expected. It's weird, it's neat, it's actually great. It's sorta like if you took a pop punk band, then added a bit of noise and emo to it in the guitar section, then made the singer get a little that way sometimes, but not often. It's really hard to describe because I've never heard anything like it before, and it's really cool. Trust me. Noisy pop is the best I can do. (WD)

(Black Pumpkin; PO Box 676; Totowa, NJ 07512)

DAMNATION/WALLEYE—SPLIT 7"

Leave it to me to listen to a record on 45rpm that should have been on 33. I thought the voice sounded strange! Anyway, this is a pretty strong release, with both bands playing a fairly similar metal tinged emo. The Walleye side is really good, although sometimes the vocalist sounds a little too much like Eddie Vedder. Especially nice is the tempo change in the middle, designed to screw up anyone dancing

around their bedroom (I wasn't.. honest). Damnation, though stands out on this release. With their song absolutely FILLED with noise (guitar squealings & background mumblings), however, the vocals are a little to caveman for my tastes. All in all though, this is a great release! (DS)

(Jade Tree 2310 Kennwynn Rd. Wilmington DE 19810)

EDGEWISE—MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS, CASSETTE

Total Hard Guy Hardcore with lyrics about fighting and being mad and the never-ending struggle that is being a tough guy. I'm not putting this down — I love Edgewise! Parts of this sounds a bit like Integrity and parts of it sound like they're straight out of the 80's, and every once in a RARE while there's some melody, too. Good ol' Hardcore — if you don't expect anything else you'll love it too. (DL)

Harvest Records P.O. Box 704 West Chester, PA 19381-0704

ROKY ERICKSON—ALL THAT MAY DO MY RHYME, CD

Roky Erickson is one of the more influential unknowns ever to walk the earth. Not many people can get a double album of tributes by the likes of the Butthole Surfers, R.E.M., Bongwater, ZZ Top and the Jesus and Mary Chain—which Erickson got on 1990's When the Pyramid Meets the Eye. He's been around forever (first album, the classic "Psychadelic Sounds of the 13th Floor Elevators" from 1966) and he's had serious mental difficulties arising from, er, substance use ever since, sidelining him for big chunks of time (like 1967 until 1980, for example). His last album, 1986's "Don't Slander Me" was awesome, a great return to form — his new one, a collection of re-recordings of old classics (like "You Don't Love Me Yet") and new ones, is pretty mediocre. This one focuses on his ballads instead of his psychotic rave-ups, and is the weaker for it. I would have preferred a reissue of "Don't Slander Me" — in fact, the best song on this album is "Don't Slander Me" — to this. I'm glad that Roky's back, and he is a national treasure and all, but I think he's better off sticking to the hard stuff, if you'll pardon the pun. (DC)

Trance Records, P.O. Box 25520 Chicago, IL 60625

THE FINKS—FILL' ER UP AND GO, CD

Surf, surf, surf. I am kinda disappointed with this disc, though. There is a lot of surf stuff out these days and there is nothing new on this. If you are needing more surf for your library then I would pick this up. It is as good as anything out there, but I wanna here something that is one step above everything else. Plus this CD has a great bit about drag racing on it that is classic. (EA)

(Dionysus Records, PO Box 1975 Burbank, CA 91507)

GOD—4 SONG 7"

If only mere words could describe my love of gob. a headlong swan dive into a miasma of guitar hyperturture, savant lyrics, and off kilter rhythms. Uhh, imagine the song structures of early sonic youth with skin peeling ear bleeding guitar low fuzzed out bass tight jazzy drumming and the lyrical and vocal bent somewhere in the ballpark of hammerhead with the additional female vocalist.....sort of. weird booklet and cover and green vinyl completes this great record. your day needs to be brightened by "hogathas space pal" and "billy the nashville star". You may even want to rush out and get a flaming gob spaceman tattoo (SW)

(Satans pimp' 1229 Ralston; reno, NV 89507)

GRADE—BELIEVE, CD

This band, which I'd never heard before, nearly gave me a fucking heart attack. I had no idea what to expect (the CD itself is a beautiful reproduction of a renaissance painting) and the first song begins with a long, whiny, lame indie-rock intro, which lulled me into complacency before turning into a loud, violent and completely slamming tune that nearly made me fall out of my chair. These guys, from Burlington, Ontario (yes, that's right boys and girls, Canada) can sound,

at their best, like a metal Fugazi. Unfortunately, most of the time they're generally much more metal (and we're talking Deicide and Death here) than Fugazi, and as amusing as that can be, I'll take my Earache records over the work of amateurs like these. They should take their first song and go with the concept — haven't they heard that punk is new big thing? What do they think this is, 1987? (DC)

(Workshop Records, 5014 New St. Unit #2, Suite #102, Burlington, Ontario, L7L 6E8, Canada)

GRIEF—COME TO GRIEF, CD

10 songs, over 50 minutes of completely crushing snail paced sludgcore. The best production they've ever had gives the guitar the extra pain factor every band in this genre craves for like a starving junkyard dog looking for some scraps, and the vocals are the clearest, rawest, and best yet! If you love doomy sabbathoid hatecore as much as I do, YOU NEED THIS! (SW)

(Century media)

GROUND ROUND—PAINTING VULGAR DREAMS, 7"

I'm not sure why but I'm completely in love with this band! I'm still trying to recover from their awesome first 7" which came out a while ago. They mix Crimpshrine sound in with a bit of...um...funk? no, just a real snazzy feel. It's cool because you can tell that they know what they're doing instrumentally and that's always nice. The lyrics range from touring to class war. I swear to god. This is fucking incredible. Just like the last one it took me a few listens, but now I want a few thousand more. Buy Buy-Buy! One of the best new (well, new-ish) poppy punk bands. (WD)

(702; PO Box 3123; Santa Rosa, CA 95402)

GROUNDWORK—TODAY WE WILL NOT BE INVISIBLE NOR SILENT, LP

OK, maybe I've approached this record with a bad attitude. Being a person that likes to think I know a little about grammar (although this zine may not be the best example of that), I was convinced that the title of this LP misused the word 'nor'. I was all excited, only to look it up in the dictionary and learn that in fact, Groundwork out grammared me. It's not a typo, even though it sounds silly as hell. Anyway, on to the record. Musically, this is fairly rote stuff, lots of tempo changes, very chugga chugga, kinda emo, kinda metal, kinda sXe. Kudos goes to the booklet, which is nice & big & full of lyrics & writings & photos. All in all though, it doesn't move me. (DS)

(Bloodlink Records PO Box 252 New Gretna NJ 08224)

GUTTERSNIPE—A DOZEN LARGE ORGANIZATIONS..., 7"

Poppy. FRICTION comes to mind. Not quite straight pop, more light pop with an edge. Some stop and start melodies. His voice is oddly Samiam-esque, though. (MB)

(Divot; POB 14061; Chicago, IL 60614-0061)

THE HABITUAL SEX OFFENDERS/ROADSIDE MONUMENTS—SPLIT 7"

First off, records with those damn big holes in the middle should all be

discontinued or burned. Despite this inconvenience, I still gave the record a chance. The HSO side was a song called "Monostat 7" and it was just basic rock n roll, nothing ground breaking. The RM side was a pathetic attempt at emo. They pulled off parts of the song halfway decently, but overall it was unlistenable. This record gets one star. (JZ)

(Rancheros De Pollo; PO Box 1157; Ruston, LA 71273)

THE HABITUAL SEX OFFENDERS—TRES HOMIEZ, 7"

This is really entertaining. Crazy music, a song kind of like Mojo Nixon, and hardcore song like the New Bomb Turks. The lyrics are totally funny, a good mix of music and humor. (DS2)

(Los Chicken Ranch Records P.O.Box 1157 Ruston, LA 71273)

HOSS—JACK OF GRUBS, 7"

Hard rock, I hate it. the singer whines "I'm the jack of grubs you'd better hose me down" Ok Pal if you say so. It seems like they'll be pretty popular among the hard rockers, but as far as I'm concerned they suck! (JZ)

(Hell YEah; Box 1975; Burbank, CA 91507)

HOT DAMN—S/T, 7"

Whew, its getting a little hot in here could somebody open a window? Ok, despite the fact these girls are using their bodies to sell their record, their music isn't half bad. If I didn't know any better I'd call it punk rock. Kinda in the vein of L7, but not bad at all. I may regret saying this later, but I think this is a great record. (JZ)

(Hell YEah; Box 1975; Burbank, CA 91507)

HUGGY BEAR—WEAPONRY LISTENS TO LOVE, LP

I went into this record expecting the worst, I had been told by many people that this record wasn't very good, and had read a number of reviews that corroborated their story. Luckily, they were all wrong. This is Huggy Bear's best release!! Yes, this sounds different than any other HB release (but what HB release didn't sound different than all the others?), but that's a good thing. They've obviously spent quite a lot of time working on these songs, as they're all beautifully crafted and are filled with exciting tempo changes & many layers of hidden sounds, like horns & backing vocals. This record demands to be listened to multiple times in a row to hear everything that is going on in it! Fuck—This is a wonderful last release for one of the most exciting bands in punk! (DS)

(Kill Rock Stars 120 NE State Ave #418 Olympia, WA 98501)

I'D RATHER BE DEAD—NEVER WANNA LOSE YOU, 7"

This is terrible, I'd rather be dead than listen to it again. Backup vocals and guitar solos and a fan club all add up to something that sounds like shit. (DS2)

(No Problem Records 917 East 5th Street Bethlehem, PA 18015)

IVICH—LA MORT HEUREUSE, 12"

Gritty, frantic French emocore. a few horn bleats break things up a bit and my bet is that fans of ebullition or gravity stuff would like this...only one page of the lyric book is in English, but the words seem to deal with life, loss, loneliness.....good 12" (SW)

(c/o Fisseau Nicolas, 103 RUE Reaumur, 75002; Paris France)



**J CHURCH—MY FAVORITE PLACE, 7"**

Yay. A new slab o' wax from these pop punk bad-boys (joke?). They turn in two original songs, one in their usual quite guitar, slightly walking (strolling?) bass with talk/sing vocals about neat stuff. Then in the chorus of it (the title song) it all just kicks in and you have to sing along while inside your saying to yourself "hell yeah!" The other is a little acoustic piece, and a neato Duran Duran cover. I must admit. I used to hate these guys. For the longest time, couldn't fucking STAND them! But then I saw them live and I was an instant fan. Great light cool poppy punk. (WD)

(Honey Bear; PO Box 460346; SF, Ca 94146)

JAWAS—WHAT GOES HAHA BONK?, 7"

Snotty hardcore. A mix between early 80's snot-nosed brat punk (not necessarily an insult) and '87 sXe HC (let me assure you, they are not sXe). Not bad. Sorta juvenile, but that's cool with me. (MB)

(7614 Ensley Dr.; Huntsville, AL 35802)

JOLLY MORTALS—PAINTSCRAPER, 7"

Yow. This is more metal-ly than anything I've listened to in a long time. Generally heavy and repetitive, although the flipside offers both some guitar solos and choruses that sounds suspiciously like '70s AOR and a dollop sheer noise. I don't think I could get through an entire album of this, but as a 7" it's OK. (SC)

(Whirled Records, PO Box 5431, Richmond VA 23220)

JULIA—...AT THE WINDOW OF VULNERABILITY, 7"

What is it with these Bloodlink bands and their super long titles. It's an emo thing, I guess. Julia... it's quiet, it's loud, it's screamy, it has both slow parts & fast. It's quite nice. Double vocals is always a nice touch, I think, and Julia pulls it off very well, thank you very much. (DS)

(Bloodlink Records PO Box 252 New Gretna NJ 08224)

KEVIN SECONDS/5'10"—RODNEY, REGGIE, EMILY, CD

This is one of those CD's I needed to review not because it was given to me, but because this is a great CD. This music is fucking amazing for any fan of guitar—drum Spinanes type stuff. This really is great. It is true pop that makes me dream of days on the beach and other cheesy stuff. Get this if you have a soul. (MB)

(Cargo)

KILLDOZER—GOD HEARS PLEAS OF THE INNOCENT, CD

Killdozer is one of my favorite bands, a fact that I admit with my head held high. Their albums Little Baby Buntin' and Twelve Point Buck are classics of sludge, brilliant expositions on the evil side of midwestern life put to colon throbbing, bass heavy, slow moving, Melvins-speed rock. At a time (back in 1985) when everyone was speeding up, they started speeding down. Now, they move at a

crawl's pace, which is fine with me. They're an example of what would have happened if Black Sabbath had dropped Ozzy and Geezer Butler was a somewhat more intellectual Jeffery Dahmer. Not as good as their best (and everyone who does not already own a copy of Little Baby Buntin' should hang their head in shame) and too many of the songs sound a bit too alike, but pretty good all the same, and well recorded by Steve Albini in his basement studio to capture the peculiar psychosis that is Killdozer. Buy some Killdozer — this Killdozer or some other Killdozer — right now. Or they'll come over to your house and kick your ass. (DC)

(Touch & Go Records, P.O. Box 25520 Chicago, IL 60625)

KOSJER—TRUE?, 7"

This is an inventive hardcore record from Belgium. Neat drum beats and interesting song changes, they show a lot of versatility. A mix between Avail, Samiam, and J Church. It is pretty neat. (DS2)

(Genet Records PO Box 44719000 Gent 1/1Belgium)

THE LAMES—CLOTH JACKET CITY '74-75, LP

Early punk, from one of the earliest scenes, in San Diego, in around 1974. Kind of like the missing connection between the early Kinks and mid-seventies punk. Or maybe the missing link between the early Kinks and Pussy Galore. Something like that. These are practices that some guy named Paul Gizanske recorded in September 1974, and they show a band that's got some great ideas, but somehow manages to remain largely (and intentionally) incoherent. Fairly interesting as an historical document, its poor recording quality (and we're talking really bad) makes it difficult to hear what's going on at all ("Soul Klan," for example, which clearly rocked at the time, is recorded so muddy that it's difficult to hear anything beyond the lowest low end). Other songs provide the missing link between the early Kinks and the New York no wave scene of the early 80s. While your older brother was listening to Foghat, these guys were tearing people's eardrums out of their heads. Other songs provide the missing link between the early Kinks and Negativland. Pretty fucking punk for twenty-one years ago, if you ask me. Of course, this all could be a joke and

I'd never know it. (DC)

(Negative Records. Wish I could give you an address. But they didn't give me one. Pretty fucking punk, eh?)

LIME CELL—S/T, 7"

This is kinda sing-along Oi influenced punk, but a tad bit heavier than most other Oi or headache releases. In fact, this is very hardcore influenced mixed with the anthemic sing-along quality of most Oi bands. SHIT! I'm on the 3rd song "you're not punk, your dirty" that makes fun of crusties. FUCK THIS! The music is good, but the lyrics blow. These guys can stick their noses in my smelly armpit anytime. (J.E.)

(Headache Records; PO Box 204 Midland Park, NJ 07432)

MARY LOU LORD—S/T, LP

Wow. What is there to say that hasn't already been said? Mary Lou does it like no one else! This is acoustic punk at its best. This a wonderful release. Most of the songs on here are covers of people like Daniel Johnston, and bands like the Bevis Frond. There are also a few Mary Lou originals here too. But you'd never notice that she's doing other people's songs, as she manages to stamp her mark on anything she covers. With her airy, floating voice, and her guitar, Mary Lou is an original no matter what she's doing. You Go Mary Lou! (DS)

(Kill Rock Stars 120 NE State Ave #418 Olympia, WA 98501)

LUNKHEAD—POLLY WOLLY CRAPPY, 7"

Zoom! This goes by very fast and sweet. The singer can keep up with the rest of the band, which I thought was pretty impressive. Many hooks. Very fast. Definitely reminds me of Sinkhole, a Very Good Thing in my book. I like this single a lot. (SC)

(Beer City, PO Box 494 Milwaukee WI 53122)

MAD PARADE—SARCASM A LA CARTE, 7"

Pretty good melodic hardcore. In the vein of Bad Religion or the MR.T Experience. If this is all sarcasm, than it is totally funny. If they really have been around since 1983, it is pretty dumb. (DS2)

(Satellite Records 920 e.colorado blvd.#151 pasadena, CA 91106)

MCCRACKINS—WHAT CAME FIRST?, CD

This is neat, kind of silly pop punk. I'm not quite sure what to compare it to. It sort of reminds me of the parasites, but it's not the same vocally at all, in content or style either. The music is though. That's the best I can do. Silly pop-sweet-sounding-punk. (WD)

(Shredder; 75 Plum Tree Lane #3; San Rafael, CA 94901)

MILKFAT-SCHOOLBOX, CASSETTE

This is great garage recorded punk. A lot of it reminds me of listening to my old Crimpshrine records. A lot of heart and energy combine to make for a really good tape. I wish this was a better recording though, it sounds a little heavy metal at times. For three bucks you get a lot of good old style punk that you can tape over if you don't like. (DS2)

(Grade A Tapes 714 Humboldt St. Santa Rosa, CA 95408)

MOLETREE, 7"

Somewhere between Sabbath and emo. Yeah, I realize that doesn't narrow it down much. This actual songs don't give away what's going on here due to the weird production. They're not bad, I mean, I just can't figure them out. (MB)

(Amendment; 580 Nansemond cres.; Portsmouth, VA 23707)

MONROE'S FUR-S/T, 7"

Ouch, this seven incher hurt my stomach. I am pretty sure it is suppose to be played at 33 rpm, but it sounds a lot better at 45rpm. It has horns in it, which I was told makes you cool these days. Sometimes my ass sounds like a horn and it isn't all that cool. They can come all the way from Seattle and kick my ass for saying this but this slow psychedelic stuff isn't cool anymore. I think in about 1969 they would have been revolutionary. (EA)

(Carving Knife, Seattle, WA 98111)

MOTHERFUCKERS-WE'RE FUCKED, 7"

Pot smoking punk retards. Their motto is "we suck, fuck you" and the cover of this 7" is so covered with sexist doodles and cock rock slogans, it took me five minutes to find the name of the band. Oh well, I'm sure it'd be fun to see these guys live, no matter how stupid it may seem. (JZ)

(Beer City, PO Box 494 Milwaukee WI 53122)

NANCY VANDAL AND THE POPGUN ASSASSINS-FROM PLANET SEX, CD

This release makes me wonder. Where do these guys come from? What kind of scene spawns music like this? I'd like to ask these questions to about half the bands I've reviewed this month. I feel stupid but I can't think of a single band that this reminds me of. Maybe some songs titles will help. "Space girl with bionic breasts" "I slam therefor I am" "sucker for your spit" and "20th century Romeo" Does that help? (JZ)

(HalfArsed)

NEGATIVE STANCE-ANGELS OF DECEIT, LP

Cool, bright blue vinyl. This is another Genet release (they put out damn good stuff!). Very metally hardcore punk in the tradition of Subway Arts, Graue Zellen, and Zygote. This isn't quite as heavy as any of the latter but is still very listenable and good. The lyrics are again very political dealing with war, social control, etc.. Negative Stance hails from Greece, but fortunately the lyrics are translated. A rocking and powerful release. (JE)

(Genet Records; Bruno Vandevyvere PO Box 447 b-9000 Gent 1, Belgium)

NEKHEI NAATZA-RENOUNCE JUDAISM, 7"

Wow, hardcore from Israel. Though the music is really raw and very basic hardcore, the spirit and anger of this group shines through, esp with the great lyrics/booklet enclosed.

Crude and lo-fi, totally punk (SW)

(Beer City, PO Box 494 Milwaukee WI 53122)

NEUTHERONE-THE GREY SKIES OPENED B.W STOUGH, 7"

Plodding doomcore the way it should be, massive riffage and plenty of sick string bending.... The vocals could use some work too. "death metal cheese" on the a-side, and too flat on the b-side, but still a solid release. (SW)

(Genet Records; Bruno Vandevyvere PO Box 447 b-9000 Gent 1, Belgium)

NINE POUND HAMMER-HAYSEED TIMEBOMB, CD

I'm afraid that Nine Pound Hammer is what Gas Huffer would be if they were totally serious. Borderline offensive lyrics that would be scary if they were for real, with a country punk soundtrack to back it all up... Good old boy, hick-core. (BVH)

(Crypt Records; P.O. Box 140528, Staten Island, NY 10314-0528)

MIKE NOBODY-BDAY CASSETTE

18 "songs" of guitar texturings...much as I like noise and industrial all this stuff seems to be one track of guitar squonk without anything else. Too minimal to cause the cranial damage of flat tire, bastard noise, of kk nul. With as much self recorded "noise" as there is these days, Mike needs to borrow a four track from someone and do something a bit more involved and creative for this to provide me with any aural stimulation. Kind of hard not to ignore....(SW)

(dont ignore; 7868 elm; taylor, MI 48180)

NO EMPATHY-YOU'RE SO SMART, CD

Pop punk a la Chicago, but faster. Harder. Louder. This is really well played. It's slightly less harmony-oriented than their last full-length, but it works well for them. Recommended. (MB)

(Johann's Face; POB 479-164; Chicago, IL 60647)

NO EMPATHY/LUNKHEAD, SPLIT 7"

No Empathy plays trashy punk rock stuff, with just enough character to keep it interesting. They also do a cover of the Effegies "Strong Box." Lunkhead plays along the same lines as No Empathy, with a cool song along, but they do a cover of "Femme Fatale" by Velvet Underground. (BVH)

(Beer City; P.O. Box 494 Milwaukee, WI 53122-0494)

NOTHING-POSTUMOUS SWAN SONG DEBUT, 10"

This is college rock, 1985, played at medium strum. "In the Sun" may be the biggest Let's Active rip ever written. The purpose of "Splinters" seems to be to demonstrate that the guitarist can play individual notes. These guys sound like Christian Rock. Maybe they are. Now I'm trying to figure out if there are any hidden Christian meanings. The same strumming pattern in every song, it seems like. They sound like

without the energy. Ooh, that was harsh. Did I say that? Now I see that one of them thanks all of the "Queen musicians everywhere." Well, at least I know he isn't a Christian Rock dude, though these guys are destroying my long-held hypothesis that gay entertainers are much more talented than straight ones. Well, they've broken up now (they broke up, apparently, in June of 1993) obviously having realized the error of their ways. Their endorsements: "Scott plays Yamaha drum pedals exclusively because they have a two year guarantee. Tim plays a fender music master bass because Scott lent it to him. Dave plays with himself for at least an hour before he comes." Now I know: they're like the Frogs without the talent or the humor. (DC)
Carving Knife Records, P.O. Box 829, Seattle WA 98111-0829

THE NUKES—WHY THINGS BURN, CD

Heavy plowing guitar with some rock-band solos and growly angry vocals. The lyrics are pretty angry too. While it's inconsistent at times, overall I like the sound of the band, even though they might not have worked out for themselves yet just what that sound is. It seems to change around a bit, even within songs sometimes. For the most part, it's thrashy melodic hardcore, about half of it played too fast for head-banging. Actually, the last half of the CD could stand well on its own. All in all, shows promise. Totally beside the point: I believe someone else has used this album title. (KF)

(Thin Red Line Records. The Nukes, 549-A Monterey Blvd., San Francisco CA 94127)

NUTHINS—MODESTY BLAIZE, 7"

Oh my! a glockenspiel. I am not sure what a glockenspiel is, but this record has one on it. From England (?) the Nuthins rock in a strange sort of way. Maybe my vocabulary sucks, but I cannot find a word that describes this band (maybe glockenspiel). If you like older style rock n' roll, no fuss, no muss, this is for you. (EA)
(Dionysus Records, PO Box 1975 Burbank, CA 91507)

OLD BULL'S NEEDLE—SIDEWALK'S LOOK THE SAME, 7"

All cylinders fire. The b-side isn't showcasing anything groundbreaking—loud drums, louder guitar, screamed type vocals. Sounds like Rye or your personal favorite practitioner of the fast-n-loud art. Not genius work, but it got my blood pumping nicely. The a-side slows it down a notch and a half; it isn't nearly as good. (SC)
(Blue Collar Records, PO Box 18752, Denver CO 80218)

ONE TON SHOTGUN—3SONG 7"

One of the coolest 7" covers in recent memory (a disgruntled postal worker stamp in the style of the elvis stamp), and the band is great too! Pedal to the metal punk rock, as forceful as a shotgun to yer mouth, massive powerchords that kick harder than yer grandpa's ten gauge! original lyrics and a cover of bowie's "all the young dudes" buries the original under a mass of crunching guitar...GET THIS! (SW)
(S-box records; 308 forest, Midd, RI 02842)

OTTAWA/JIHAD—SPLIT LP

Holy shit batman! These two hardcore bands are from Michigan? THIS DESTROYS! Ottawa is fast raw and brutal as a chainsaw wound. Jihad slows

Live,

OTTAWA/JIHAD—SPLIT LP

Holy shit batman! These two hardcore bands are from Michigan? THIS DESTROYS! Ottawa is fast raw and brutal as a chainsaw wound. Jihad slows the hate down a bit and adds crunching guitar and more complexity but is equally harsh on the ears. add a blasting production and full lyric sheets for both bands and you've got A split that should get your hands as fast as you can! (SW)
(Abiology)

OX—THEY DON'T EQUATE A BROKEN HEAD WITH A WATERMELON GEEK, 7"

Side B is cool, side A sucks. Straight ahead punk with funny lyrics, sometimes. "New houses" is a great slam, and "Cowboy Song" is a well needed attack on country line dancing. Side A, however, completely sucks, with Rollins like lyrics and uninteresting music recorded badly. Side B, however, rules. I guess half a good record is better than no good record at all. (DC)
Chumpire/Greg K., P.O. Box 2514, West Lawn, PA 19609

PEYOTE STOMP—BEER SOAKED B/W THIRD FEUD, 7"

"Beer.." is a cool upbeat rockabilly tune, but the acid rock jam on the flip leaves me colder than the Wisconsin winter. (SW)
(Westworld; PO Box 73787; Tucson, AZ 85733)

PILLBOX—JIMBO'S CLOWN ROOM, LP

I think this is rock and roll crap, it even has a picture of a naked lady on the cover. (DS)
(Steven Ship/Big Brave Entertainment Inc. c/o Jet Lag Inc. 155 E. 55th Street, GH, New York, N.Y. 10022)

PITCHBLEND/EGGS—SPLIT 7"

I was so excited to get this release. I love Eggs, and had heard great things about Pitchblend. Unfortunately, this left me REALLY dry. I guess fairly complex—but uninspiring—instrumentals will do that to a guy. (DS)
(Jade Tree 2310 Kennwynn Rd. Wilmington DE, 19810)

POLIO—CHARLEY BROWN WINS AGAIN, 7"

Nimble noise from Texas. Driving bass and noisy guitars create a somewhat Touch and go inspired din. Second 7" for this band (as far as I know), and even better than the first. Track this down if you'd dig a punk version of the Jesus lizard or nomeansno. (SW)

(Polio; Picadilly; 2803 CHery Lane, Austin, TX 78703)

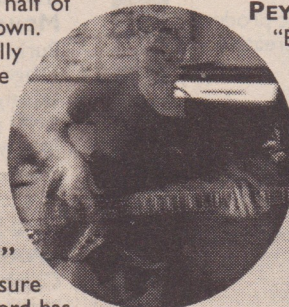
THE POTATOMEN—NOW, LP

After having my world changed by the Potatomen's debut 7", I had very high expectations for this, their first full length release. Glad to say, this met those expectations! The Potatomen don't cease to amaze me; they continue to release their light, airy, poppy, acoustic music against amazing odds (mainly the fact being that more than a few people would like to see their heads on a plate for even trying to call themselves 'punk'). If you haven't heard the Potatomen yet, pick this up & decide for yourself. This is beautiful music for ugly people, life is hard

and the Potatomen know it, but they also know that it's good sometimes and will serve both of those emotions right back at you in a way that no other band in punk is doing. No one can capture melancholy like the Potatomen can!! (DS)
(Lookout Records PO Box 11374, Berkley, CA 94712)

PRETTY MIGHTY MIGHTY—UGLY, CD

An interesting and often very effective combination of the best parts of several lame-ass college bands from 1988, Pretty Might Might are definitely better than the sum of their influences. PMM can sound wonderfully dissonant and propulsive (the way they use Noel Sayre's violin like a saw on "Lionel Richie" is awesome) and they can sound kind of derivative



and hokey. But even when they're sounding derivative, as on some of the parts of "Antigone," they aren't boring, which is important. If you like good, earthy alternative pop songs, with a good edge to them while still retaining a certain pop beauty, this is a fine choice. (DC)
(Burnt Sienna Records, 207 Powhatan, Columbus, OH 43204)

RESIST—IGNORANCE IS BLISS, LP

Resist has been one of my favorite bands for a while, and I was excited about getting this LP. I put it on my turntable, and for the next 35 minutes I can't believe what I am hearing. This is quite literally one of the best records ever released, and perhaps the best record I've EVER heard. Buy this record NOW. NOW. NOW. Resist, for those of you stuck in a cave, are perhaps the best punk band ever and sound like Discharge stuff mixed with late 70's



britpunk. Melodic bass and anthemic vocals make you want to scream and smash things. I think I'm going to call Kelly and convince him to re-form Resist now. (J.E.)

(Profance Existence; PO Box 8722 Minneapolis, MN 55408)

THE RICKETS—I CAN'T FIND MY BEER, 7"

I'd heard a lot about these guys so I was happy to get this 7" in. Pretty run of the mill '77 stuff if you ask me, which is kind of fun to sing along with, but does get a little old by the end of the record. The real question is what the hell is up with he second song? It's like bad imitation grindcore or something. EW! Think old school, think 77, think beer. You've got it now. (WD)

(Beer City; PO Box 494; Milwaukee, WI 53122)

RKL—RICHES TO RAGS, CD

Fasten your seatbelts, kiddies, this is Megadeth all the way. From the Mustaine-styled screaming vocals to the blistering (almost inhuman) double guitar solos, RKL ("Rich Kids on Acid") does not let up for one single solitary second. The lead guitar is really high strung and the drums are relentless. I guess it's flawless as far as speed metal goes; it certainly has the formula down, although the lyrics are a little bit juvenile. The musicians are all extremely talented but I just can't help thinking that all the songs sort of sound the same, kind of thrown off the assembly line. Their act has been honed so successfully that they have no problem filling the halls, so I'm sure they won't care what I think. (KF)

(Epitaph, 6201 Sunset Blvd. #111, Hollywood CA 90028)

THE ROCK STARS OF LOVE—THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHARLIE MANSON, 7"

This is weird and really original. Use of pianos and organs with punk music produce a dark sound. I like the cover art and the music and lyrics also. Really creative and worth checking out. (DS2)

(Hobart Arms PO Box 8104 Bellflower, CA 90706)

SCHWARTZENEGGAR—THE WAY THINGS ARE...AND OTHER STORIES, CD

Athemtic political/personal punk from England. Sounds a bit like STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, but this band is too restrained sounding. With lyrical content as pissed as they have, the music rave party "mellow punk" isn't so clean and fresh. It's got good melodies and nice wailing bass lines...just not anywhere near rocking enough for my tastes. (SVV) (Allied)

SEA MONKEYS—PIZZA FACE, 10"

Neato. These zany guys always make me smile. They're really goofy and funny lyrically. Musically they remind me a lot of old Angry Somaons except goofier (yes musically too). The trademark high voice of the sea monkeys seems to be getting a bit lower, but that's just as neat. The standout song is about the Kennedys. "Fuck 'em, Kill'em, Throw 'em in the water!" Whenever that song comes up I listen to it multiple times. It is rad! And hey, CJ Ramone plays on a song. Just get it and giggle your way home. (WD)

(Dionysus; PO Box 1975; Burbank, CA 91507)

SELFISH—S/T, 7"

The cover of this 7" shows a mountain of skulls, so you can imagine what they sound like. Fast grindcore with screaming/vomiting vocals. Selfish sound a lot like some Swedish or German crust/grind bands like Hiatus, Luzifers Mob, and Crude S.S.. In fact, Selfish might best be described as a mixture of these 3 bands (they even have some solos). A powerful grindcore release, definitely NOT weak. (J.E.)

(Genet Records; PO Box 447 9000 Gent 1 Belgium)

SHOTMAKER—S/T, 7"

Enjoyable, Am-Rep-like punk, recorded badly, as is the tradition. Kinda catchy, but not catchy enough that you'll actually feel like humming it or something. God forbid. Generally good riffs, one great riff (the bridge riff in "Rope and Pulley," which sounds like a long lost Fugazi song), and lyrics just abstract enough that you won't be able to distinguish them on the page from, say, Cure lyrics. But since you can't understand them anyway, the point is sort of moot. Overall, I really liked this. Nothing new, but very solid. And they put themselves out on a record label that name checks both a classic TV show and master Canadian author

Robertson Davies. Pretty cool, if you ask me. (DC)

(Kung Fu/Manticore Records, P.O. Box 366, Station B, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 2W2, Canada)

THE SICK ROSE—OTHER FACES, CD

More retro garage rock courtesy of Italy this time.

This is a CD composed mostly of alternate takes from a previously released L.P. (which sounds just like all of the other stuff that already came out in the sixties). Too bad. (BVH)

(Dionysus; P.O. Box 1975 Burbank, CA 91507)

THE SLACKERS—CIRCLE A YOUR DAY, 7"

YES!!!! More 77/early 80's punk from Hunstville, AL's Slackers. I can't say enough great things about these punx. Bratty obnoxious punk rock the way it should be. Lots of screaming, lots of 'fuck you's', and natural distortion on the guitar (I think). If these guys don't play here again soon I'm gonna fuckin' die. This is fukin punk, get it NOW. (probably the best band in Alabama<not counting the one I'm in, of course<grin>>) (J.E.)

(Nation of Kids; 3104 Fouché Drive Hunstville, AL 35805)

SLACKJAW—UNCOMFORTABLE B/W MENACE, 7"

Burly Hemlet-ish noise rock. one tone riffage and lumberjack vocals knock yer skinny butt around the room. heavy AND good! (SW)

(Mercy records; 735.5 B New Hampshire, Lawrence, KS 66044)

THE SPENT IDOLS—THROW IT AWAY, 7"

Catchy not quite pop-punk. The — music kind of becomes secondary, as it's hidden behind a sing-songy, speak-singy vocalist. The vocals really should annoy me but somehow they remain kind of engaging. Enjoyable. (SC)

(Pogo Stick Records, PO Box 354, Midland Park NJ 07432)

STALE FISH I I O, 7"

Not bad, but something is missing... Maybe feeling or maybe it is in the production but I cannot get into this record. First off, it starts with an instrumental that basically sucks. Sorry guys but you are definitely better when you are singing. Almost rock n' roll but no where near the lo-fi stuff that has been coming out. Since most punks have little money to throw away on crappy singles, I wonder why so many are coming out. (EA)

(Sour Note Records 72 Huffman, Rolla, MO 65401)

STEEL WOOL—LUCKY BOY, CD

Rock N' Roll baby. Steel Wool are good at what they do, kind of off beat lowdown stuff. It is strange that on the back of the sleeve they look like they are all playing hard and fast, but the CD seems kind of hesitant. I think this CD didn't capture their full potential because I heard they kick ass live. It could be the cold feeling of a CD so if you like their kind of stuff find the vinyl (hey send vinyl next time, duh?). I would still recommend this for the lo-fi freaks like myself, it has been spinning itself in my room for three

days now and I am not sick of it yet. (EA)
(Empty Records, PO Box 12034, Seattle, WA 98102)

STEADFAST—EVERYDAY LIFE, 7"

Catchy, melodic, punky stuff in that Crimpshrine/Fifteen/oldstyle-jawbreaker mold, but shooting itself all that much further with a cleaner sound and the addition of a trumpet which gives it a much more moody feel. Excellent release for such a young band... I'm hooked. (BVH)

(Youth Power Records C/O Philip Deslippe; P.O. Box 3923
Manchester, CT 06045-3923)

STICKS AND STONES/WESTON, SPLIT 7"

Both of these bands play a kind of poppy, mellow, punk rock, with Weston being more on the punk side than SAS. Neither of them really grabbed my attention. Well..., the second song on the Weston side was actually really good. All in all it's a pretty mediocre record. Beautiful packaging, though. And great recordings, too. I'll bet if you already like these bands you'll be all over this. (DL)

Reservoir Records P.O. Box 790366 Middle Village, NY
11379-0366

STRIFE—ONE TRUTH, CD

sXe HC in the vein of JUDGE or some similar. Reminds me of a lot of bands from about '87, actually. Not that that's bad. Quite to the contrary. Although this style can be really overplayed, Strife is pretty damned good at what they do. So paint some big X's on your hands, buy a hooded sweatshirt, and buy this CD. (MB)

(Victory; POB 146546; Chicago, IL 60614)

SUBWAY ARTS—S/T, LP

This is great! When I played this I was completely suprised by one of the more original punk bands I've heard in quite some time. I think they're from Luxembourg, maybe this explains their pretty much original sound. Featuring female vocals

(Humble)

they really remind me of somewhat metally(in a melodic sense) harder punk bands like Graue Zellen. I also detect some Zygote influence. This is sing along, yet fast and kinda heavy, yet talented at the same time. Very political lyrics against sexism, capitalism, etc.. and a great booklet. Nice!!!(JE)
(Genet Records; Bruno Vandevyvere PO Box 447 b-9000 Gent 1, Belgium)
(PeaCy Records; Winandy Simone 22 rue de l'Ecole L-3317 Bergem, Luxemborg)

SWANK—BEN ROSSI, 7"

The horn is a very nice touch—possibly a saving grace—but there's just too much sonic clutter and the singer irritates me. For some god awful reason, I just kept picturing Buster Poindexter, which isn't a fair comparison at all but accurately reflects my reaction to this. The band just doesn't do it for me at all, although I really do like the horn (and the guitar, in patches). (SC)

(Beer City, PO Box 494 Milwaukee WI 53122)

STONEYBRIDGE—THE RACE, CD

I'm searching through the skimpy packaging on this trying to find some reason that this would have been sent to a 'zine with the word "punk" in it's name but all I can find is a thanks list which includes GOD 1st, and "All college radio" a little later. This sounds like a whole lot of rock crap I hate. It would probably be a stretch to say that if Sensefield is the only punkish band you like then you might like this a little bit. No, that's too much of a stretch. If you live for the band Live then here's a CD for you. Please, take it. (DL)

Jaffam Records 602 Tarreyton Drive Ruston, LA 71270

TABLE—S/T, TAPE

This band, which Albini claims is a blatant Slint rip—off, is actually a blatant Bitch Magnet/Bastro rip off (and since Bitch Magnet was a blatant Big Black rip off, there's a certain circularity here which we can all find rather pleasing). They do it well, mind you, and I appreciate the almost King Crimson—like complexity of the compositions, and the weird, angular rhythms delivered in their distorted glory in bizarre time signatures. I guess the question is this: Do you mind that they're ripping off someone else's ideas? They're very entertaining, just completely derivative (maybe even three generations removed from the original). I'll be listening to this tape again, and I'll enjoy it, but I'll probably need to take a bath afterwards. I wonder if they've done a double bill with Chair... (DC)

TEMPERANCE—SEARCHING FOR SILENCE, CD

This sounds so much like Uniform Choice's second album it's incredible. Slow, melodic post hardcore with little bursts of power here and there and very well sung vocals about broken relationships. There are lots of elemental references on this one. "This Fire", "Shifting Tides", "Left out on the ice", "The Dam is broken now", "Rain washes away all what might have been", and so on. I think they cover everything but tornadoes and earthquakes. This really isn't bad — I have a feeling it's going to grow on me after repeated listenings. (DL)

Moo Cow Records 38 Larch Circle Belmont, MA 02178

THORAZINE—COFFEE, TEA, OR..., 7"

Starts out with a stripped down raw metal song, and proceeds right to rock 'n' roll that goes nowhere. It's got all the parts, but it doesn't click for me. Try again. (MB)

(Hell Yeah; PO Box 1975; Burbank, CA 91507)

THUNDERFUCK 69—MELTDOWN #1, DEMO

Guitar rock crap, maybe the seventies would be kind to this shit but no right minded punk would like this. Cover of the tape glows in your black light (dude). Maybe this stuff sounds like Mozart when your high as a kite but these sober ears couldn't take it. If you like mindless guitar Rock, Sub Pop, and black lights get this. Otherwise save your mind, and money and buy something else. (EA)

(4617 Kingswell Ave. LA, CA 90027)

TORTOISE—WHY WE FIGHT, 7"

This is so incredible that I dont have the vocabulary to begin describing it. All I know is that I am going to miss school tomorrow to listen to it all day. The money I just spent for this, and the new SEA AND CAKE 7" is probably the best \$8 I have ever spent. I cannot even begin to figure out how they created this music. It makes me feel like it is Summertime and I am riding on a swing set in a grassy meadow with a rootbeer float in my hand



and an enormous sun is illuminating everything around me, except it isn't a sun, it is my Tortoise 7". It isn't jazz, and it isn't rock, and it isn't experimental, so I do not really know quite what it is, except the best thing you could be listening to right now. (DS2)

(Soul Static Sound)—I guess they don't want fan mail.

TREEPEOPLE—ACTUAL RE-ENACTMENT, LP

This is very good melodic hardcore. It reminds me of the Epitaph sound at times, but the music is a lot better than most of that shit. Also, there are some really neat poppy guitar parts. I probably wouldn't buy this myself, but they are really talented and I would definitely recommend it to some of my friends. (DS2)

(C/Z Records 1407 E. Madison #41 Seattle, WA 98122)

TRICK BABYS—LAST CHANCE MAN/THE HIDEOUT, 7"

Sympathy for the Record Industry rarely fails, and I am glad to announce that with the Trick Babys they have fulfilled their bargain. The best rock n' roll 7" to come along my turntable in awhile. Two songs that for some reason remind me of the band X, when they were good. They do the male/female vocals as good as anyone except the Rezillos. If you like rock n' Roll Sympathy style, get it, got it, good. (EA)

(Sympathy for the Record Industry)

TUMOURBOY—THE GIRL I LOVE IS AN ANARCHIST, CASSETTE

"Tumourboy" is a one-man band and for that reason alone I must recommend you support him by buying this cassette. Who cares if he uses a drum machine? There are some humorous cuts on here but I can't tell you about all of them cuz I don't want him to get caught for his blatant plagiarism. Most of it's original, though. Here's the "Henry Rollins" song: "Pissed off?! Yeah I'm pissed off, but I ain't no self-righteous bastard/Like Henry fucking Rollins." Another song's entitled: "Government Bad, Punk Rock Good." Isn't that really all there is to say? (KF)

(\$5 ppd. U.S., to Tumourboy c/o Alternative Stagnation Records, 1107 Severnview Dr., Crownsville MD 21032)

UUTUUS—SYSTEEMIN RATTAISSA, 7"

Big mohawks, anarchy, and too much beer. Mix these 3 ingredients and you get Uutuus, a fukin noise/hardcore/crustcore band that is among the best I've heard. Anti-Fascist/anarchist lyrics and lots of noisy blistering punk make this 100% PUNK AS FUCK! (in other words, get it) (J.E.)

(Genet Records; PO Box 447 9000 Gent 1 Belgium)

VANILLA—SORRY FOR THE TEAR THAT SHINES IN MY EYES. I DREAM..., 7"

The incredibly stupid, extraordinarily pretentious title can be explained by the fact that these guys are French. Thankfully, Derrida and Lacan never got into punk, or we'd have more things with titles like this.

(Yeah, I know, it's make fun of foreigners month here at Punk Planet. So sue me.) In any event, the brand of hardcore they play renders whatever language they may actually speak pretty much irrelevant. Bursts of loud, fast, occasionally anthemic noise interrupt, sonic youth like

floating jazz dissonance. Pretty good, actually, although I'm hesitant to recommend something with a title like this, or with a lyric like "I am dying on being alive." Although, I guess, I should forgive them for their sins. They are French, after all. (DC)

(Laissez — Nous Jour, C/O Norbert Chomat, Rue De Bougainville, 86 280 Saint Benoit, France)

VIRTUAL REALITY/NEUTHRONE—SPLIT 7"

The first band, VR, reminds me vaguely of Dead white and blue. IT's not heavy metal, its just not hard rock and its sure not punk rock. But u guess I could say its somewhere in between all three. the flip side, neuthrone, plays instrumental death metal over samples of crying babies. what fun! (JZ)

(Genet Records; PO Box 447 9000 Gent 1 Belgium)

VON ELMO—COSMIC INTERCEPTION, CD

The Von Elmo story is interesting but the music is crap produced digital style, with phasers and horns and noise. Banned from MRR, for what reasons I don't know. This is definitely not mainstream but I can definitely see the frat kids in town loving this. This isn't very new either, I got it for my radio show last year, and time didn't make it any better. If you don't trust me, then trust the two dozen phone calls I got to "turn this crap off". (EA)

(PO Box 6963, NY, NY 10128)

WHIRLYBIRD, 7"

Exceptionally clean, and catchy sounding pop-punk, kinda like if REM were a punk band and had the least amount of energy. Side one has a peppy number called "Nine Lives" and a slower, emo-sounding piece called "Circle." Side has two more upbeat numbers, which rock all the same. Kind of an emo K records thing. (BVH)

(Whirled Records; P.O. Box 5431 Richmond, VA 23220)

THE WRETCHED ONES—NICE GUYS FINISH LAST, 7"

I've waited a long time for this one. These crazy beer drinking punx are back and they're just as cool as ever. 3 great original sing-along, barpunk/oi type songs and a cover of the old song "lipstick on your collar" which I think is from the fifties or something, but who can really be sure, hell, it's probably from the eighties and I'm just a retard. Anyways, fucking great stuff here, classic style done unbelievably well. I can't say enough, just trust me, it rules! (WD)

(Black Hole; 12 W. Willow Grove Ave Box 130; Philadelphia, PA 19118)

VIA—THE BEST PUNK ROCK IN ENGLAND, SON, CD

An amazing CD comp of some of the best pop punk I've heard recently. I say amazing because most comps I've gotten in my life usually have a few good songs and a few bad ones. You usually have to wade through a lot of

shit. I'd say almost every band on here is really, really good. There is really not one track that I groan to get through. 24 different bands (FUNBUG, WAT TYLER, GUNS 'N' WANKERS to name some you might have heard of) make this a fucking GREAT CD. (MB)

(Snuffy Smile; 401 HONGOII-M. 2 36-2 YAYOI-CHO; NAKANO-KU. TOKYO. 164. JAPAN)

V/A-BOSTON HARDCORE-IN MEMORY OF..., 7"

Three songs here by Intent To Injure, Dive, and Chillmark. I hate to say it, but it's all pretty bad. ITI mix HC and Rap and it works as the best track on here. I don't know what else I can say. (DL)

Moo Cow Records

V/A-DARK EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, CD

A so-so compilation of some really terrible metal bands and some decent punk/Hardcore stuff. Standouts include Integrity, Ringworm, Whatever, and False Hope. Other than that this is not a very exciting compilation. Dwid from Integrity, who put this out, said in an interview that most of the bands on here suck. Go figure. (DL)

Dark Empire P.O. Box 770213 Lakewood, OH 44107

V/A-DRUG FREE SCHOOL ZONE, COMPILATION CASSETTE

A mostly 4 track and live recording comp. of mostly unknown NY Punk bands - with the possible exception of Ted Franko, who you've just got to love. There are a couple of decent tracks on here, but for the most part I think this is a tape that will end up in the hands of friends of the bands and not many other places. (DL)

Big Dork Records 10 Rock Hill Lane Scarsdale, NY 10583

V/A- FILTHKICK, TAPE

This 60 minute comp tape is included with issue number three of Flashbomb fanzine. Bands include Agent 86, who does their Youth Brigade thing, Universal Order of Armageddon, Plainfield, and the Spent Idols, among many more. The Standout track is Lux Indigo doing a night club jazz version of SNFU's "She's Not on the Menu," complete with female vocals. (BVH)

(\$3 ppd to FlashBomb; 68 Cornett Drive Red Deer, Alberta

T4P-2G7, Canada)

V/A-FRIC SYSTEM, 7"

This record contains four bands, Econothugs, Granny's Hole, Moody Jackson and My White Bread Mom. This is OK 3 chord hardcore, some heavy metal and punk stuff too. My White Bread Mom was the highlight of this record, a really energetic and fun sounding punk band. I don't really like a lot of this music. (DS2)

(Burnt Sienna Records 207 Powhatan, COol, OH 43204)

V/A-LAKE COUNTY FREAK SHOW, 7"

The a-side is two hook-laden songs by Lunkhead & Stampy; Stampy's is the more successful of the two. The b-sides have a ska flavored track by Nostrilsaurus (yes, Nostrilsaurus) and one by the Smoothies. The Smoothies remind me a little of Bratmobile. Is this a sexist pig association of two bands just because they happen to consist of females? I hope not. Anyway, I like their song. (SC)

(Dental Records, PO Box 621, Grayslake IL 60030)

V/A-ROCKTOBER FEST, 7"

Four band compilations are tough to figure out. Bands do one of two things: 1) Give you one of their best songs or 2) Give you a throw away track from their last recording session. Boss Fuel give the best track on this record, hands down. Lyrics that go "Got to Keep it/ Gotta Keep it Pure" and they did just that (A best song track). Creep Factory, featuring Small Factory and Colonel Johnny Creeper,

They sound just like what you would expect from that combination and I suspect that someone different from me would love this song (A best song, I think). Flipping the record over was the biggest mistake I made that night. The Goblins give us "Nuthaus" with umlauts over the a (ouch!). This track sounds like born to be wild or something along that lines. Tart end the seven incher with "Whore", a sing songy song, if you know what I mean. Slow and boring, definitely not ROCKtober. Overall this 7" is probably worth a listen or maybe just copy the first two songs off your

friend. (EA)

(Rocktober Records, 1507 East 53rd #617, Chicago, IL 60615)

V/A-UNO-COMP, LP

5 hardcore bans from Michigan turn in mostly 2 songs each. too bad Jihad only has one (see review of Ottawa/Jihad split LP this ish!) song, but Lovkheed, Electra, Fletcher, and Inourselves are also good, leaving only the Deconstructions songs to fall on flat ears.... The bans are mostly slower more complex hardcore, leaning on the emo side. Worth tracking down. (SW)

(\$6; CHecker; 1516 burdick st; kalamazoo, MI 49001)

RECORD XXX-DRRT PUNK MTHREKFR

This record is like the best record ever made. The singer is straightedge, the guitar player is a total crusty anarchy punx, the drummer has a Samiam teeshirt, and the bassist is a lesbian. All bases covered.

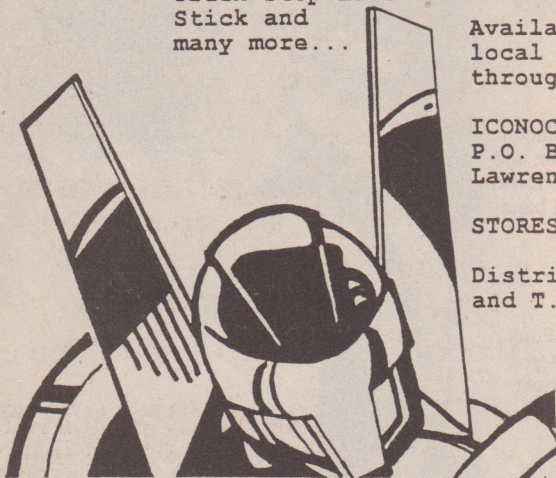
(Major Label Inc., pob 666, Rockefeller Plaza, NY, 11111)

Rules for graphic Artists #148: You can make it fit if you fake it enough through "composition of negative space!"



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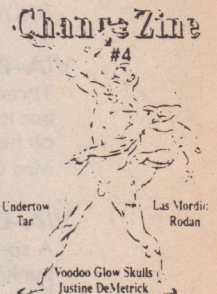
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#6 in works: Craw, Deadguy, Lifetime
Doc Hopper, Kevin Murphy (Farside).
Back to indie bands. For good.

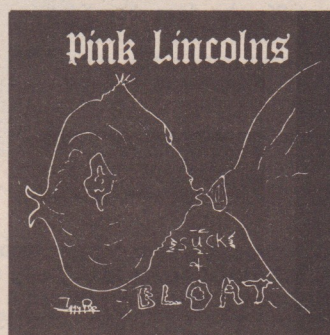
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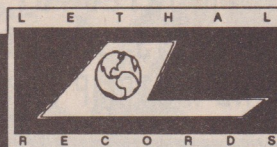
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Due to the huge influx of zines we've been getting recently we've added a whole bunch of zany punks to our ranks. Welcome them with open arms. They're neat. Now if only all the people would send zines to the right address we'd be on a roll. **Matt Berland (MB); Brian Czarnik (BC); Will Dandy (WD); Karen Fisher (KF); Ray Hennessy (RH); Bret Van Horn (BVH); Jason Jarrell (JJ); Kenneth Kimmel (KK); Jim Testa (JT); Matt Wobensmith (MW)**

APE SHALL NEVER KILL APE #1

10 THINGS #9

This was a good read. It has interviews with Fitz of Depression, Los Crudos, The Queens, Face to Face, godheadSilo, Sicko, and Slug. There's also a column by Satan, articles about punk being "in", and politics (gasp!), different scene reports, and a whole plethora (I knew I'd be able to use that word) of zine and music reviews. Well worth it. (JJ)

(10 Things/ 1407 NE 45th St. #171 Seattle, WA 98105; \$1.50 ppd 8.5 x 11—40 pgs)

ALL THE ANSWERS #1

This zine is free in Arizona but well worth two bucks by mail. This debut issue has new editor Irwin flexing his editorial chops, ranting about the current Sellout of punk rock, making up his top ten lists, and talking about why he started a zine. Then there's junk mail from various right wing organizations, interviews with Rhythm Collision, TVT\$, and D.I., reviews of punk records, and zine reviews. A good first issue with a nice black&white graphic style, although Irwin could do a little more fact-checking regarding his attitude toward major labels (Roadrunner is an indie, for starters, he confuses Downcast with Downset, and Jesus Lizard never signed to Giant.) (JT)

(Irwin, 207 W. Clarendon 14B, Phoenix AZ 85013 \$2)

ALLEY CAT #2

This zine seems to be composed of short essays whose principle purpose is to piss people off. There's a short story about a horny Catholic piece, something about Siamese twins that I didn't really understand, an account of someone's confrontation with anti-abortion crusaders, and a story about surviving Catholic parochial school. Despite the obvious attempt at an in-your-face attitude, I didn't really think this worked. (JT)

(Lee Reiherzer, 820 Frederick St. Box E, Oshkosh WI 54901 \$1)

AMENDMENT RECORDS FRIENDLY FANZINE #6

Cleanly laid out and easy to read, this issue has columns (one about Oliver North's candidacy for Senate), record reviews, an interview with Avail, and of course, the Amendment records catalog. (BVH)

(It says free, but send a couple of stamps at least to: 580 Nansemond Cres. Portsmouth, VA 23707)

C.J. is apparently in high school and totally punk, which accounts for this anarchic zine with lettering that runs off the page and lots of rants about personal stuff (like jocks wearing punk tshirts at school.) The record reviews are hand-lettered but make sense (if you can read them.) It looks like this guy (gal?) has a lot of good ideas, although it may take a few issues to whip them into shape. (JT)

(C.J. Winston, 488 Green Bay Rd, Highland Park IL 60035 \$1)

BABY SUE - VOL. 4, #4

A buncha of comics that are sort of funny. Some of the stuff seems sort of racist, but I'm not sure. I'm really not sure of anything dealing with this thing. Get it if you're into underground comics, I guess. The art is nicely done. (MB)

(\$3; POB 1111; Decatur, GA 30031-1111)

BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED #11

Well, I usually like a nice sex zine, but this one doesn't even excite me. It doesn't even have any nice nudie b/w pictures that I go ga-ga over. Its a newsletter sorta thingy with interviews with some 21 year old porn star Valeria and her fellow actor husband. Also inside is an essay about John Holmes (the man that had a big weenie) I thought it was to pricey. (BC)

(\$3.00ppd 130 W. Limestone st. Yellow Springs, Ohio. 45387)

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO PUTTING ON SHOWS

36 info-filled pages explaining step-by-step how to put on a show, or at least some variations of same, by Jen Angel.

Accompanying the writing are humorous themed cartoons by Kael Goodman and Julian Dangerfox. Some TOC entries include How To Find A Place, Legal Stuff, How To Get A Sound System, How To Finance This Whole Thing and What To Do Differently If You're Doing A Benefit. This looks helpful, and is certainly inspiring. (KK)

(2 or 3 stamps to Jen Angel POBox 43604 Cleveland, OH 44143)

BLINK #7

This zine covers a lot of bases. There's a section of DIY artwork, interviews with Gashuffer, Fury In The Slaughterhouse, and a Miami River poet, fiction, reviews, a tour

diary, and lots more. Plenty to read and easy on the eyes, too. (JT)

(PO Box 823, Miami FL 33243-0823 \$2)

BLOOD BOOK #2

The self-proclaimed meanzine...it's not that mean really. It contains Emo/SxE type coverage. Really hard to understand and read at first but I think that may just be me. Includes interviews with Apt. 13, Tony Erba (Face Value), Wide Awake, etc. Not great but not bad. Nice print job though...i think I can still see! (RH)

[PO Box 770213 lakewood, OH 44107 \$2!/?]

BURPING LULA

"After Election Day Issue." Sounds interesting, but sorry, Lula, all I received was the cover. I think all the inside pages fell out in the mail. I remember reviewing and liking a previous issue of this zine, however. My advice is to order one and be surprised. Like you're really going to buy something just cuz I tell you to, anyway? The inside front cover says a new issue comes out in late February so maybe you should ask for that one instead. (KF)

(Free; POB 14738, Richmond VA 23221)

CANVAS #9

This zine obviously took a lot of heart and it's well worth it. A lot of articles, reviews, etc. Good pictures. This is zine to look for. Well worth the money. (MB)

(\$1; 2176 Turk Hill Rd.; Fairport, NY 14450)

CHUMPZINE #40

A one-pager about the scene in Pennsylvania. Nothing really special about it. It's made up of personal musings, which did not interest me in the least, and record and zine

reviews. Not really worth it. (JJ)

(PO Box 2514/ West Lawn, PA 19609-0514; 1 stamp 8.5 x 11—1 pg)

CONTRASCIENCE ZINE #4

"Yet another version of truth." This issue, dated Summer/Fall 94, contains some good political discussion—a thought-provoking article on the suppression of information during and after the Gulf War (how soon we forget); two essays analyzing the pornography issue (from male and female points of view—good); a short personal essay on why attitudes shouldn't be unbendable and unchangeable. These written pieces, and more, are interspersed with collage-like band photos and some cool photo-montage artwork. Some of the copy is hard to read (visually and mentally) but I am happy that someone is making a zine about serious issues, well researched but not preachy, leaving the conclusions to us, the reader. Keep up the good work. (KF)

(\$2 ppd.-US; \$3-Int'l; to POB 8344, Mpls MN 55408-0344)

COWLANDER

A sincerely twisted hand drawn calendar for 1995 hand drawn by Tony Binty of A Cow Fanzine. Bursting with vibrant artwork and an uncannily entertaining style, A Cowlander should be on every punks desk. Every day of the year even has it's own cause for celebration... my vote goes for "spanking the tender cactus day." (BVH)

(\$1 or trade to: Binty, inc. P.O. Box 621 Grayslake, Ill 60030-MAF)

DIGESTOR #3

A freaky alien zine. It also has some punk records, concerts, and fanzine reviews. New Jersey's Buzzkill is the featured

band in this issue. The author had his place robbed so send neat-o crap to him. Also make sure you get this it's cool, he has an enquiring mind like mine. (BC)

(\$1.00ppd. Thumboh Publishing p.o. box 154. New Brunswick, N.J. 08903-0154

DIRT #S 1 & 2

Dirt is dedicated to dead and dying punk rockers. Issue one has an interview with UXA, reprinted disturbing newspaper articles, some record reviews. Issue two has more of the same with an IMS showcase review. (BVH)

(no price, but send a couple of stamps at least: P.O. Box 383 Vista CA 92085)

DISHWASHER #12

Everything you ever wanted to know about dishwashing but was afraid to ask. Definitely one of the most original zines I've read in a long time. Read

about the escapades of Pete, the traveling dishwasher, reviews of books and movies that in some way incorporate dishwashing, and great dishwashing comics. Definitely worth it. (JJ)

(Dishwasher! PO Box 4827/ Arcata, CA 95521; \$1.00 ppd 5.5 x 8.5—52 pgs)

EF (EXTENT FANZINE) #4

This newsprint zine has a great screened cover! The photos and layout are superb; very artistic and original, I'm totally jealous. Interviews w/Still Life, Split Lip, Dave Smalley (from Dag Nasty & Down by Law), and Dave Sine of Tidbit fanzine. Also a Farside tour diary, a How-to-Make-a-Zine thing, an action shot skaterboy centerfold and little humorous bits. The writing is good, too; the interviews are revealing and natural. Let's hire this guy! Well, I guess if we could pay him we could, huh Dan? (KF)

(\$1.50 to John LaCroix, 148 Hillside St. #2, Boston MA 02120)

EMOTIVE IMPULSE #1.6

A really heartfelt zine with cool commentaries about life, self-empowerment, etc. It also has a little thing by Vique Simba. There are some very stock articles, but also some pretty cool little things that really made me think about life in general. I read through this twice. (MB)

(\$1 Eur.; \$2 World.) (Astrildaan 341; 8310 Brugge; Belgium)

EMOTIVE IMPULSE #2

Subtitled "the zine of blah" - hey buddy, you said it, not me. It's certainly not bad, but there ain't a whole lot here to interest people in the first place. Three pieces of paper, three poetic rants on friendship and life, and one ad. That's about it. (MW)

(Joeri, Astridlaan 341, 8310 Brugge, Belgium)

EVIL EYE #13

Larry Grogan is one of the coolest people I've ever met in the Jersey music scene. He's also one of the biggest, but that's another story. Every Evil Eye usually includes a bit of rock n roll history (Larry's a big 60's garage-rock fan) as well as contemporary commentary on the music scene. It's always worth reading. This issue includes a history of the Jersey shore scene (ten years before Springsteen came along to immortalize it,) an analysis of the film Pulp Fiction, and excellent record and zine reviews. (JT)

(Larry Grogan, 3 Tulip Ct, Jackson NJ 08527 \$1)

FHS - FALL '93

Half-sized zine about school life, a result of the editor's (Phil) self-professed...contempt for school. Hmm, I wonder what FHS stands for?

[my guess is "fuck high school" -ed] Speaking of school, this thing could use a spell check, and the copy I received is miscolated and includes duplicate pages.

Contains photos, articles (mostly reprints), rants and a hilarious poem about returning to a high school reunion with predictably gory results. This zine will tell you more than you need to know about why school sucks.

Jawbreaker is mentioned once. (KK)

(\$1.00 to FHS POBox 3923 Manchester, CT 06045-3923)

FIAT LUX #2

In my most recent batch of to-be-reviewed zines, I received several that I really liked (amazingly enough), but this one is the best of the bunch. You can tell that heart and soul went into the making of it. Although it is only a simple stapled 8-1/2x11 Xerox job, and I wish some of the photos were a little bit lighter, it is

very beautiful. The main piece of writing consists of a wonderful European travel diary in which our hero meets all manner of interesting folk. The typed entries are collaged in with photos and other art work. There are also a couple of pieces about the author's medical problems and related philosophical musings. There are other pages with only a photo and a few well-placed words...sort of zine haiku.

Arty, but accessible and intimate. I hope there will be another issue out; I am very intrigued and encourage the author/editor to continue. (KF)

(\$1 to Lonewolf, POB 40520, Portland OR 97240-0520)

FLASHBOMB #3

FLASHBOMB #3

Chock full of goodies, this issue has interviews with New Bomb Turks, Plainfield, Polvo, Superconductor, Bloodthirsty Butchers and Copass Grinderz. Also included are record reviews, and the Filthkick 60 minute comp. tape. Very well done. (BVH)

(\$3 PPD to: 68 Cornett Drive Red Deer, Alberta T4P-2G7, Canada)

FLIPSIDE #93

Am I really qualified to review Flipside? Haven't most people seen it already? If you haven't you are missing out. So chock full of stuff it makes MRR look anemic; it's really almost too much to read. The best parts are a bunch of California "scene reports," (sort of) from all areas and all types of people. But the reporters don't make themselves sound hipper than you, rather they invite you to join them next time. It made me homesick reading about some of my favorite used-to-be-local bands (Driptank, Jehu, Trumans, etc.) Also interviews w/Heavenly, Rancid, Sebadoh, Trumans Water, and many more. Worth the price for the letters section alone. Flexi-disk included. I think I'll subscribe, actually. (KF)

(\$2.50 at newstands everywhere, or write POB 60790, Pasadena CA 91116 (US subs \$12/yr.)

FREE DISEASE #?

Short interviews with Spitboy and Joe Lally from Fugazi. It was worth it, for me, just to be able to read the interview with Joe Lally. Get it if you have a spare stamp. (JJ)

(No Production! 7221 Highland St./ Springfield, VA 22150; 1 stamp 8.5 x 11—1 pg)

FUCKTOOTH #16

I really, really like this zine. Kinda personal but not personal like in the "Oh-cry-for-me!" type way. It has very cool stuff for fellow zinesters, bandsters and scenesters, stuff for vegans, a very cool and informative article on Food Not Bombs. Also comes with a very phat patch. (RH)

[PO Box 43604 Cleveland, OH 44143 \$1+ a stamp]

FULL BLAST #2

The relatively in-depth interviews with two of the greatest bands around today, The Devil Dogs and The Rip Offs, make this zine worth checking out. There's also a review of a bunch of San Francisco shows, some cool commentary, and plenty of record and zine reviews. (JJ)

(3329 Lonefeather Crescent/ Mississauga, Ontario/ Canada/ L4Y3G6; \$2(?) ppd 8.5 x 11—36 pgs)

GUMPTION #1

This is the first issue of what promises to be a nice lil' zine. In it, Sheri has a cool rant regarding some comments Julianna Hatfield made about women guitarist. Also a letter to author Benjamin Holf, a fantasy piece on owning a gun, and some thoughts about big movie maker Quentin Tarantino. Oh yeah, don't eat at Fleetwood Diner if you are in Ann Arbor. And if you want to help her out with getting the Diner in trouble send an extra 19cent stamp. (BC)

(be cool and send 2 stamps to: gumption p.o. box 7564: Ann Arbor, MI. 48107-7564)

HEEDLE IN A NAYSTACK #6

A good effort, but it gets a little too personal at times. I just don't like reading about the lives of people I don't know. If you do, check it out. Contains the requisite reviews of records and zines and a really cheesy comic. (JJ)

(Joe Prettyflower! 57 Baldwin St./ Bloomfield, NJ 07003; \$2.00(?) ppd 8.5 x 11—36 pgs)

HELLBENDER #SEX

Well, it has undoubtedly the shortest SPLIT LIP interview ever: WARZONE interview, too. You know, like sXe stuff, except more cut and paste than usual for this type of zine. PLUS, it has a sense of humor, which is very cool. I really like this, you know. (MB)

(\$1; POB 547; Vails Gate, NY 12584)

HELLBENDER THE UN-ZINE #666

It seems they're trying to make up for a weak zine with lot's of attention-grabbing graphics. Has a cool color cover spoof of horror mags, but that's about the only cool thing about it. There are interviews with Dismay and Fifth Season, and 2-question interviews(!) with Outspoken and Strife. They ask the same questions to each of the bands (such originality). Add in some music reviews, and a lot of talk about metal, and you've got a waste of a buck. (JJ)

(Hellbender Inc. c/o Jason Horton/ PO Box 547/ Vails Gate, NY 12584; \$1.00; 4 stamps, or trade 8.5 x 11—26 pgs)

IMPORTED FROM TEXAS #1

Tony is a 23 yr old punk fan and artist who recently moved from Texas to Illinois (hence the name of the zine,) and this is a journal of his experiences. The hand lettering and personal details will inspire Cometbus comparisons, but Tony includes some really cool drawings in between his musings, which sets this apart. And, like most of these "perzines," there's something irresistible about them (like reading somebody else's diary — even if it's all boring stuff, it's like seeing the world through another person's eyes.) (JT)

(Tony Binty, PO Box 621, Grays Lake IL 60030 \$1)

INSIDE FRONT #5

A nice small-sized zine using colored paper (they know how to snare me), self-subtitled a "nonprofit sxe/hc directory...all facts, no bullshit." No posturing or superiority complexes here, either. Just the news that's fit to print: scene reports, recording info, band updates, also some interviews with a few band members as *individuals*. Wow, new concept. Great SxE manifesto proclaimed on the back cover. (KF)

(Free; through May 95, write to 213 E. Franklin St. #34, Chapel Hill NC 27514; afterward to Inland Empire Productions, 2695 Rangewood Dr., Atlanta GA 30345)

INTY BINTY #9

One sheet of paper. Just one. Has a hilarious comic and "punk rock rule book". Very cute. They have a 1995 punk rock calendar available for a buck from the below address. I wish some bigger zines were this mercifully short. (MW)

(SASE - Tony Binty, POB 621, Grayslake, IL 60030)

JUMBO SHRIMP #7

Interviews with Gizzard and Babe the Blue Ox. Zine and record reviews. Writings on Target Stores (he he), garage sales, school and the abortion debate. 18 pages (half-sized, Xeroxed) from Meshell in MN. Oftentimes warm and fuzzy. (KK)

(\$1.00 or stamps or trade to Meshell POBox 667, Prior Lake, MN 55327)

JUST FINE #2

Perzines make the world go 'round as far as I'm concerned and at the moment this is one of my faves. Great writings and thoughts on a whole bunch of issues that you can just read and nod your head to and it's just plain old neat. The one thing that stuck out to me was an article on feminism which seemed to be close to saying that women should use sex to get their way which I just couldn't get at all, but besides that...he he he. Seriously, this is a fucking great zine. Buy, consume, spend, read! (WD)

(Two Stamps (how friendly); Just Fine; 1507 Strawberry Lane; Johnson City, TN 37604)

LOST MEANDERINGS #1

The FRUMPIES, JAWBREAKER, HUGGY BEAR. This is really good for a first zine, I like it a lot. It's articles made me think, and their interviews interested me. There's not more you could ask for in a zine but this. Cool, good, nice. (MB)

(\$1 US/\$2.50 World; POB 225; St. Cloud, MN 56302-0225)

MOO COW #13 / VIGILANCE #3

A big piece of newsprint with one side for each zine. More like a newsletter. Reviews, mainly in the straightedge vein. This is cool because it's short and to-the-point, and able to be read in less than five minutes. Can't go wrong for free. (MW)

(SASE - 38 Larch Circle, Belmo 02178)

NATION OF KIDS #2

A group of Huntsville, Alabama kids are making a scene with this zine. It has all the stuff I like in a zine. Nice funny cartoons, funny pieces on the "other" types of people in society, and an informative MRR-like column by kid Mathias. Plus chats with local bands Property, Shitboy from Outerspace, and Slip. It makes a nice read even if you're not from Alabama! (BC)

(\$1.00ppd. N.O.K. 3104 Fouché dr. Huntsville, Alabama. 35805)

NOISES FROM THE GARAGE #3

Contains interviews with Jeff Dahl, Hammerhead, Janitor Joe, The Smears, Supersuckers, Hard-ons and more. I think it's great that they include a review of each band's current release alongside the interview. A good way to associate the music with the folks. Comics, great photos, and more record reviews, including The Frisbee Pile. 48 full-sized pages packed with mucho punk stuff. A keeper. (KK)

(\$1.50 to Noises From The Garage POBox 712 Lawrence, KS 66044-0712)

OH WELL #2

A wall of tiny handwritten scrawl scares away all but few brave souls who dare read this. Which is a shame, considering that a person obviously spent hours upon hours creating this. Rants on MRR, sexism, relationships, and death. NO graphics, no photos, no reviews, just personal essays and thoughts. Works as a letter to a friend, but for me - gotta run and catch an old rerun of Cagney and Lacey. (MW)

(\$1 or a "good letter" - Route 2, Box 438, Leeds, AL 35094)

ON THE RAG #3

Interviews include Manhole, Brother Vibe and Coal Chamber. Record reviews, an article on Kambucha Mushroom Tea, show reviews and much more. A packed and informative look into another scene. (BVH)

(No price, write for info: P.O. Box 251 Norco, CA 91760-0251)

OSWALD #1

Tons of live band photos interspersed with various opinions and rants on subjects ranging from Star Wars to police, to the U.S. in Chile. Also included are record reviews and a guide showing that records are made from beef gelatin. An interesting read. (BVH)

(75 cents to: P.O. Box 319 Keeneland Hall University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky 40526-0011)

PATHETIC LIFE #7

Totally, truly, no-doubt-about-it, perzine. No pictures no ads just straight out writing from Pathetic Doug. This issue chronicles Doug's very depressing life in December. Pathetic Life is a diary for Doug who writes a hell of a lot about movies and shit he sees on TV and everything else going wrong in this fucked up world. Very cool read. It reminded me of a grimmer version of Permafrost. (RH)

[24 Ellis St. #141 SF, CA 94102 trade]

PEPITO'S FOLDER #3

This is the zine of the legendary Pepito Pea. Featuring his wacky sense of humor and outlook on life, this zine proves an entertaining read. Also included are the "Are You Alternative?" test, and interviews with Fuzzy, and the drummer of Veruca Salt, show and record reviews, and other rants and stories. (BVH)

(No price, but send a stamp or two: Pepito's Folder c/o Brandon Yu 1134 West Loyola Box 0773 Chicago, Ill 60626)

PERSONAL POLITICS #6

Another neat installment of this personal style zine. John and Dave continue to write about interesting stuff to make you think, but they seem to be cheering up (my lord, they've even got

girlfriends!). This issue talks about neat stuff like "smart-edge" which is a really goofy way of saying straight, but not retarded straight edge which I found a lot of sensibility in. There's also a real neat story on why John quit his job based entirely on his beliefs and ethics which I think is a pretty strong thing to do. A bizarre interview with Total Chaos that is actually quite funny and an anti-racism article among others can also be found. Go guys go. Great zine, but make next time's even longer! (WD)

(\$1; Personal Politics; PO Box 644; Banner Elk, NC 28604)

THE PROBE #4

What could I say about this mag that would not seem like pandering? Yeah, most of the 'alternapup,' 'emo' and 'grrrl' punker types will probably hate this mag, because of its in-your-face sexual, drunk, punk, you-hit-me-I-hit-you-back type of stuff from folks who don't give two fucks what you think of 'em. I love it, and I hope they can learn to love it too! About a jillion record, zine and show reviews, and not all one liners. This mag is a glossy-covered 100 page machine, chock fulla interviews, columns, art and excellent band photos. Okay, maybe there's a few naked pictures thrown in, but before you toss this one aside and say ...Ewwwww! Porno Punks! give it a read. Excellent layout and design. Big time. Bravo. (KK)

(\$4.00 to The Probe POBox 5068 Pleasanton, CA 94566)

PUNCTUAL #2

This is a very cool zine that stresses the fact that it's being done just for fun, and not money. Stories about a dying grandfather, the sending of "obscene" material over BBS's, smoking, and the labeling of today's youth are very well done. Also has some record and zine reviews and columns by the contributors. I can't wait to see future issues. (JJ)

(5114 Williamsburg RD NW/ Cincinnati, OH 45215; 2 stamps 5.5 x 8.5—32 pgs)

RADIO TOKYO (?) #(?)

This looks like it was thrown together really fast. Has stories about voting, and some other political-type stuff. Kinda cool, maybe next time they should put a little more time into it. (JJ)

Tom Fukl 2500 S. Florencel Nampa, ID 83686; 1 stamp (2 stamps for a sticker too) 8.5 x 11—4 pgs

RAGE #5

I'll start with a quote from the cover to describe this 32-pager out of the sunshine state: Personal columns, rage pages, reviews, dreams, poetry, art, music, books, comics, travel. RAGE has plenty of the above, with a seriously strong poetry selection and interviews with Cause & Effect and All (a shortie.) Nice photos and layout for this bi-monthly publication. (KK)

(\$2.00 to Rage Magazine POBox 1289 Lake Worth, FL 33460)

RATIONAL INQUIRER #2

Local Florida zine looks to create a spot for itself in what appears to be a somewhat apathetic scene, but not for their lack of trying. Interviews w/Sam Black Church, Skankin' Pickle, Pink Lincoln, more. Newsprint with a little color; looks good. The interview questions border on the dumb side, but sometimes it works. The best is a good interview w/Jawbreaker by bobby s. fred (not really affiliated with the zine). Columns and reviews, too. (KF)

(Free in Florida; otherwise \$1.50 ppd., 2050 W. 56 St. #32-221, Hialeah FL 33016)

REMINDER #4

Another poetic zine from Belgium - what, did Indian Summer or someone just play there or something? But seriously folks - this is a brief but entertaining personal zine, with a rant on spirituality and a bit on the scene. What's interesting here would be the two letters to the editor, and the responses. One from a "hardliner" explaining HER views and proving that they're no more of a threat than Marge and Homer Simpson. There's another from a krishna guy, but it's so silly I can't stop laughing enough to write about it. (MW)

(Wim Vandekerckhove, Hogeweg 316, 8930 Menen, Belgium)

RIPPING THRASH #9

Way cool underground zine, reminding me of No Sanctuary from Switzerland. Very well done interviews with tons of bands, from pop punk to anarchist crustcore types. Excellent *confrontational* chats with: Jawbreaker, Older Than Dirt, Disaffect, and several more of your faves. I love it when people aren't afraid to call people on their shit. Plus, great scene reports from Peru (!), Finland, France, and more. Strongly anti-authoritarian, with just the right mix of politics and personality. I'm really

impressed. (MW)

(\$3 ppd. - POB 152, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs, DE14 1XX England)

ROCKTOBER #11

What else can be said about this short of - it's fucking brilliant!! Dedicated to trash rock'n'roll and underground culture, this entire issue is devoted to MASKS. Bands who wear masks, bands who sing about masks, masks as a fashion accessory - the list goes on. Highly entertaining throughout - too many great features to mention. Ends with a piece on Scandinavian Black Metal - heshers who like to burn down churches. Twisted and definitely mandatory!! (MW)

(\$2 - 1507 E. 53rd St. #617, Chicago, IL 60615)

SHODDY GOODS #1

This cow-town zine comes from Jason Useless of the Meat Sisters. Jason and his staff take on Rancid, have a short but informative interview with Moral Crux, and include a scene report about the St. Louis punks. Even though I am not a big fan of this town, I still kinda liked the zine. Also included is a great guide to the parks in St. Louis. (BC)

(send a stamp to: Shoddy Goods p.o. box 160150: St. Louis, Mo. 63116)

SICK TO MOVE #3

I don't wanna come down hard on this mag because Scott put a lot of work into it, but let's just say it has been done before. This isn't really a bad zine, it's just the usual zine fair. 7/10 Interviews, 3/10 reviews, 1/10 rants. The interviews are long and in-depth unlike interviews in other mags that shall remain nameless. Included: Down By Law, Heavenly, Lois (RH)

[PO box 712471 Santee, CA 92072-2471 75 cent stamp]

SLUG & LETTUCE #37

This newspaper-style zine is sort of the unofficial newsletter of the ABC No Rio zine, as editor Christine Boarts documents the crusty goings on there with both her camera (great live photos)

and her pen. This issue includes several pages of zine reviews, Chris' musings on the current state of the punk scene around her, record reviews, and lots of punk classified. A great way to keep in touch and well worth checking out. (JT)
(Christine, PO Box 2067, New York NY 10009-8914 Two stamps SASE, donations appreciated)

SNAK FUD #8

This zine actually made me laugh out loud. The back issues I have of this zine make me laugh out loud, too. I almost never laugh out loud at any zine. I was on a trip somewhere once and the guy I was staying with pulled a Snak Fud outta my bag, started reading it, and actually fell out of his chair. Good stuff. Get this. Now. (MB)
(\$1.5; #127, 48 Shattuck Squ., Berkeley, CA 94704)

SOCIAL FUCK UP #5

Oooohhh....this is painful! Hello, Suicide Prevention? Yeah, I'm going to patch a call through...This is one heck of a dismal, hateful, angst-ridden zine. Let's just say that someone's got a frown on and leave it at that. Too many dark passages to mention - my favorite would be: "the guy on the corner was handing out pamphlets, but I was too busy extinguishing other life's (sic) to really give a fuck". Fun in a perverse way, but someone could use a happy meal here. (MW)

(\$1 ppd. - Adam, 714 Humboldt St., Santa Rosa, CA 95404)

SOUNDVIEWS #32

This is a nice, very well put together, professional zine. Most of the coverage is focused on the happenings in New York City but it also focuses on acts around the globe. The layout isn't dull and neither are the interviews: Murder Junkies, Glenn Branca, Die 116. It also has some nifty columns and reviews to boot. Check it out. (RH)

[96 Henry Street Suite 5w Brooklyn, NY 11201-1713 \$2.00]

SPEED BUMP #4

This is one chaotic perzine, strait outta Jersey. Littered with quotes from punk songs past and present, cut, paste, cut, paste, cut, paste, (Christ how many glue-sticks did it take to make this anyway?!?) Some reviews, somewhere, an interview with 2 people who I guess put on a punk radio show and "Ways to Overthrow the Bourgeois." With all the hearts and talk about how sexy Alec Mackaye is I thought

this was Sassy. (RH)

[c/o Allison Cohen 1020 ravens Crest Dr. Plainsboro, NJ 08536 55 cent stamp]

SPIRALS UPWARD #1

A personal zine with a very cool layout. He thinks about stuff. Some of the same stuff I, and probably a bunch of you, think about. It's got cool pictures, cool writings, cool everything. Support this. (MB)

(2 stamps or trade; 1210 Gregory Pl., Downers Grove, IL 60515)

SPLATTERSPLEEN #2

Pretty hip zine out of St. Paul. This is put out by Amanda who is in Impetus Inter. This ish has got their tour diary, a few dreams, a few reviews an article on preschool by Todd Spitboy, and a few more rantings to keep you warm at night. Cool, cool! (RH)

[PO Box 4061 St. Paul, MN 55104 \$1+ 75 cent stamp.

STIFLED #4

Girl makes zine. Personal thoughts on vegan-ism, scene-ism, sex-ism (I said *personal thoughts*, not lectures). Interspersed with a few record & zine reviews, live show reviews, and other diary-like entries. Nice. That sounds too wimpy, it's really not boring. Oh! I forgot my favorite part, review of records w/fabulous packaging. I have a collection of those myself. (KF)

(\$1 ppd., c/o Jocelyn Rousseau, 215 Elmore Ave., Woonsocket RI 02895)

SUBLIMINAL TATTOOS #3

This is put out by some Christian punk guy and it's about comics. It's got some cool articles, some interesting stuff, and it's mostly got parts from various comics so you can know exactly what's going on in the world of underground comics. It's slick, nice, easy to read. Interesting. (MB)

(\$3.95 US; \$5.50 CAN) (9604 SE 5th Street; Vancouver, WA 98664)

TEENAGE FINGER FUCK

This is one short story put together in a little cut-sized format with a colored plastic cover. The drawing on the front looks like a cheap true confessions magazine. The writing is good; the story rather misogynic, but if written by a teenage boy it's probably sadly true to life. This is a great idea for a continuing series, especially if other authors and/or themes are explored in future issues. (KF)

(\$1 ppd., Alley Cat Press, c/o Lee Reiherzer, 820 Frederick St., Box E, Oshkosh WI 54901)

TRUSTKILL #3

This is a very well done zine complete with interviews, pictures, articles, etc. It's sort of like a personal erratic MRR, if you can imagine that. This is really, really good though, no matter what I say. It's the religion issue, by the way. (MB)

(\$3 US/\$5 OTHER; 23 Farm Edge Lane; Tinton Falls, NJ 07724)

UPRISE #1 I

Live life through the eyes of a suburban high school punk rocker. Or, relive past nightmares. Either way, it's a personal look inside this young fella's mind. Great scam idea - put glue (yes, glue) over stamps when you mail a letter. The receiver can wash off the cancellation and use it again! What a scam! (MW)

(\$1 - POB 1420, Sykesville, MD 21784. also - Rayoftday@aol.com)

VIGILANCE FREEZINE #4

Zine and record reviews (bunches of 'em) along with other stuff (distro list, columns/editorials and a wonderfully funny bit on How to Pick Up a Post-modern Slut, reprinted from a zine called P.M.S.) Pressed on 8 x 17 newsprint, this mag is full of data and affordably priced!!! (KK)

(2 stamps to Vigilance Records POBox 4021 Attleboro, MA 02703)

VORT'N VIS ZINE #1

When it comes to anything Belgian, I don't know much beyond Hercule Poirot and those big strawberry waffles, but this seems to be the newsletter of a combination youth hostel and Gilman Street-type DIY club run by a collective. There's lot of stuff about the rules of conduct (don't get drunk, don't beat anybody up,

etc.) band interviews, some record reviews, and opinion columns. This looks like a good contact address if you're backpacking your way through Europe and need a place to crash in Belgium. (JT)

(Kiekenmarkt 7, 8900 IEPER, Belgium ??? Send a couple IRC's)

WORDS AND LETTERS #1

A lil' artsy type zine done by a straight edger that falls let down by others who have left the scene. Well, maybe if you had better straight edge zines the sheep..Oops, I mean people might consider staying in the "scene." (BC)

(and there aint no address on the zine)

WORDS AND LETTERS #3

The last issue of this zine for a while, according to the inside cover. 20 pages, half-sized. Interview with Manumission, a Nations On Fire tour diary and record reviews. Also a record collector's section on older Belgian punk releases. The type is so eensy-weensy that it (ouch) hurts my eyes. (KK)

(no price listed. Jeroen POBox 90 8500 Kortrijk Belgium)

Wow #2

This is a simple, yet interesting zine. It gets hard to read at some points, but overall legibility is good. Some real thoughtful rantings about the author's life. There's also a weird, but cool, story about two women, one of which who has "a clitoris the size of a thirteen-year-old's penis." Wow. (JJ)

Billy Blizzard/ 3419 SE Belmont #13/ Portland, OR 97214; 2 stamps 5.5 x 8.5—48 pgs

YUKO #1

A funny little zine that has a punk rock word search, dot-to-dot, horror scopes, maze, and some highly entertaining stories. Check it out! (BVH)

(50 cents or 2 stamps to: P.O. Box 322 Newark, DE 19711)

AS WE'VE NEVER GOTTEN A BOOK TO REVIEW BEFORE, WE DON'T HAVE A BOOK REVIEW SECTION, SO WE'RE JUST GLOMMING THIS ON TO THE END OF THE FANZINES. IT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH, KIDS, START PRINTING YER OWN BOOKS—SO WE CAN HAVE A SECTION. REVIEW BY DAN SINKER

"I need a free column on the last page of the fanzine reviews," I said to Sean, who is laying out the reviews in this issue, "so I can review Dan O'Mahony's book".

"Dan O'Mahony wrote a book?" Sean asked, a look of complete and utter amazement mixed with total and absolute bemusement flashing across his face.

"That's what I thought too." And it was.

THREE LEGGED RACE is comprised of essays and poems written by O'Mahony over a five year period (1988-1993). It deals mainly with the death of his mother, the gambling away of his inheritance, the formation and breakup of his band, 411, and his athletic sex life. All in all, it makes for a very amusing read, which may not have been O'Mahony's intentions.

The book starts with an ending: the death of his mother. It is summed up in a short nine line poem, which is then expanded into an essay chronicling the time O'Mahony spent with his mother during the duration of her illness leading up to her death. A downward spiral.

which is actually a very good metaphor for the rest of this book. We start with a death and we never really get any better. O'Mahony goes to great pains to make himself appear to be as pathetic and helpless a creature as possible. Is this intentional in a sort of post-straightedge pre-emo "I need to build myself up and knock myself down" kind of way? **It certainly doesn't appear so.**

O'Mahony makes himself (quite literally) an open book. No subject is too humiliating to be left out, whether its the fact that he has premature ejaculated during seemingly every sex act he's ever performed (and yes, he does document & detail every one), or the fact that he think Caesar's Palace is the end-all be-all of class. Because of this, I was able to speed through the book, with each page leading you to a new level of pathos and depression, you can't put it down until it's done.

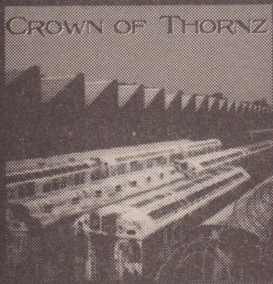
The essays are written quite well, with both the heavy-handed seriousness of O'Mahony's MRR columns and a new found wit. The poems (or 'verse' as they are referred to on the back cover) are another story. Whether this is O'Mahony's attempt at showing his sensitive side, or just an attempt to try something new is unknown to me. Either way though, it fails. I found myself skipping over the poetry and moving right into the next essay.

One thing to remark on (and O'Mahony remarks on it in the introduction) is the fairly shallow treatment of women as characters in the book (and I guess in his life). The introduction explains that he has found new respect for women since he wrote many of the essays in the book, and I can only hope that he has. Here, aside from his mother, the only women in the book are either (1) looked at with unfulfilled lust, or (2) sex toys that he eventually dumps, or (3) sex toys that eventually dump him. Kudos to Dan for owning up to the fact that his views of women are neandertholic at best (hey, I just invented a word!). **I hope he has changed his ways.**

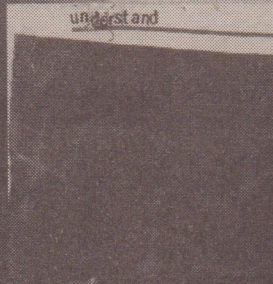
All in all, **THREE LEGGED RACE** is compulsively readable, if for no other reason than to experience the first hand writings of a person in severe depression and self doubt. If you're a fan of O'Mahony's you probably own this book already, but if you're in the mood for a good, quick read (that is both hilariously funny in the parts that are supposed to be sad, and terribly sad in the parts that are supposed to be funny) pick it up.

(\$5.00 ppd from: Bad Man Merchandising 2411 Durant Ave. #7, Berkley CA 94704)

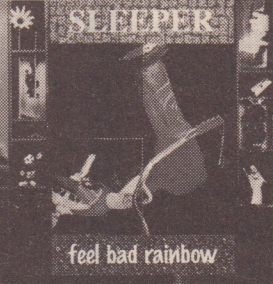
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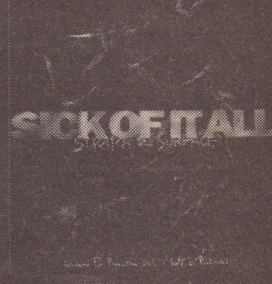
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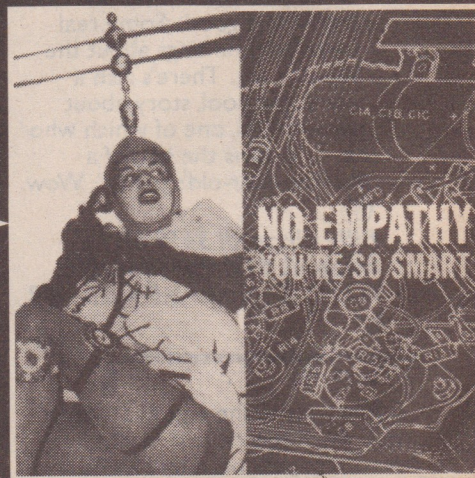
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